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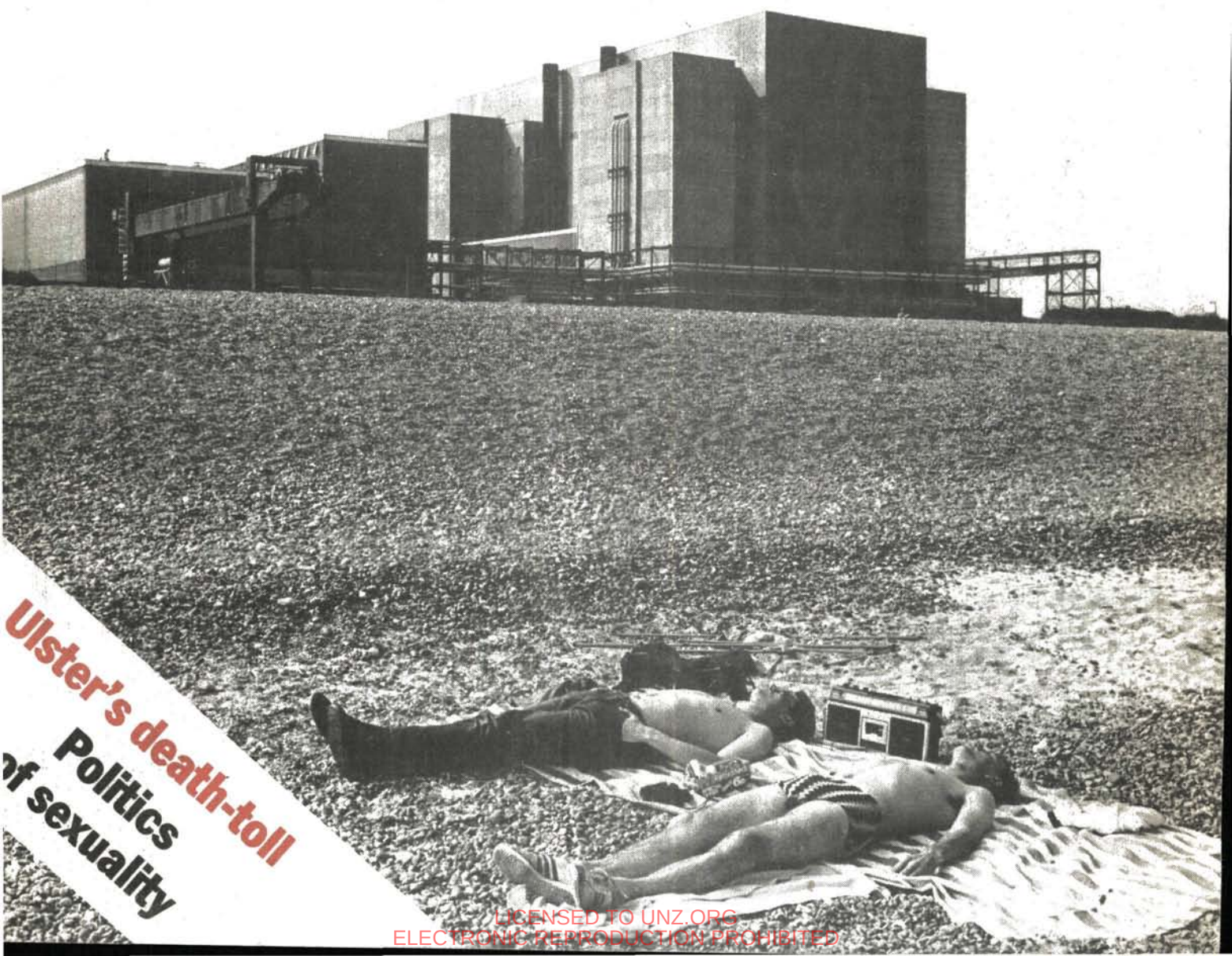

Ulster's death-toll

Politics

of sexuality

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New Statesman

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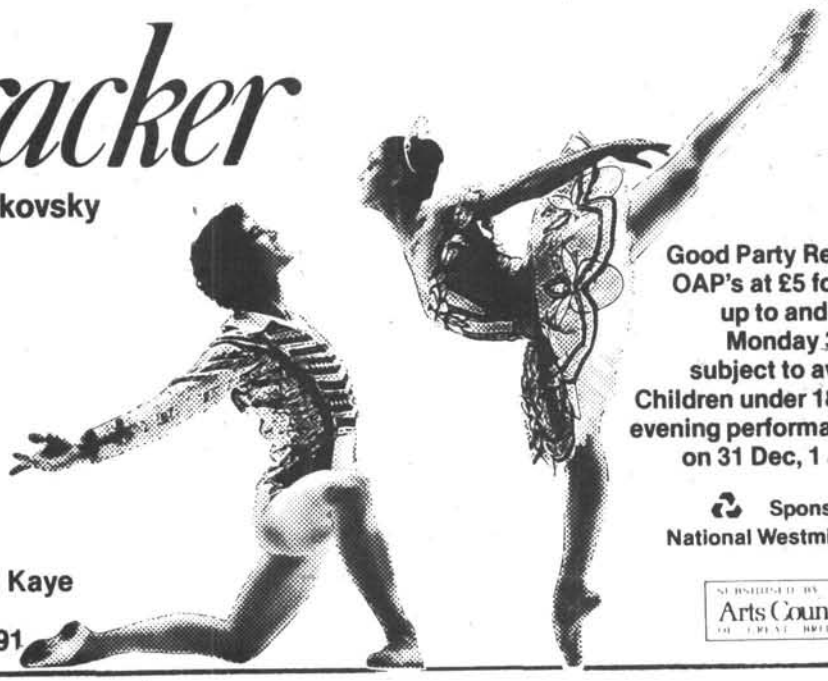

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New Statesman Vol 105 No 2703 7 January 1983

A nuclear watershed

ALMOST THE FIRST OFFICIAL visit Mrs Thatcher paid anywhere as Prime Minister in 1979 was to France. She surprised everyone by insisting that almost half her programme should be spent not holding talks with President Giscard, or his colleagues. She spent the time instead in the south of France on a personal inspection of the French civil nuclear power programme. Her determination to push British energy policy as rapidly as possible in the same direction has not wavered from that day to this.

The result of her prejudices on the subject and the support that she has given to the nuclear lobby is that the United Kingdom is now in a unique position. A country which has larger proven and accessible coal reserves in relation to its industrial requirements than almost any country in the world – a country which is more than self-sufficient in oil and is likely to remain so for many decades – has the only government in the world which is determined to push ahead now with a gigantic, new civil nuclear power programme – a programme furthermore that is based on an essentially untried and highly controversial design.

Next week will see the start of a dramatic confrontation (set to last for most of 1983) between those for and against the siting of the first of the new generation of power stations next to the old Magnox nuclear power station at Sizewell on the Suffolk coast. As Duncan Campbell and Colin Sweet explain in their article on page 8 of this issue, setting out the essential issues involved in the Sizewell inquiry, the machinery of an inquiry into a local planning application is being inappropriately used to ventilate industrial, economic and political arguments of the widest possible scope.

The Sizewell inquiry will quite simply be the most important recent event in the history of British civil nuclear development. Many of the arguments will be arcane and difficult for even the interested general public to follow and evaluate. They will centre on the costs and benefits of launching now upon an entirely new generation of nuclear power generating systems; and upon the general safety considerations involved.

It will be (correctly) asserted that nuclear safety standards have risen substantially over the years. The existing Sizewell Magnox plant would not now get the necessary safety and other clearances, if it were being built as new. And it will (also correctly) be asserted that the safety record of British nuclear power has so far compared favourably with that of other domestic energy industries.

The critical point, however, when the arguments are over, is that (whatever any experts say during the inquiry or elsewhere) no-one really knows *how* dangerous a PWR reactor could be and no-one can say with certainty what the *worst* conceivable accident might entail. Other conventional industrial processes can and have caused havoc. But they are in this critical respect different in kind.

The conclusion from this argument is not that nuclear power stations should never in future be built. It is, however, first, that the burden of proof of a requirement for more nuclear power stations should be very substantial indeed – a burden not met today in Britain. And, secondly, for any design as inherently risky and unproven as the PWR being proposed for Sizewell, if it is to be built, it should be sited a great deal further from subtantial population centres than is now being proposed for the first full-scale operational experiment. □

Mrs T strikes again

MRS THATCHER lists her recreations in *Who's Who* as music and reading. Yet her chief pastime at the moment appears to be dreaming up ways of discrediting the Foreign Office and all who serve in it. Her dislike of the FO is considerable – so much so that she has set up her own foreign policy advice unit under Sir Anthony Parsons. She deliberately denied its retiring Permanent Under-Secretary Sir Michael Palliser his traditional peerage in her New Year honours list. The latest bust-up with Saudi Arabia thus seems to have gone admirably from her point of view: the harassed Mr Francis Pym has taken all the flak while the true culprit, the Prime Minister herself, remains unscathed.

The background to the Saudi rumpus is simple enough. Saudi Arabia has declined to accept a visit from Mr Pym, as retaliation for Britain's refusal to receive a delegation from the Arab League, which included a representative of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. What has not had so much attention is the fact that Britain's snub to the Arab League was delivered at the behest of Mrs Thatcher rather than the Foreign Office.

Mrs Thatcher's view appears to be that Britain should not deal with the PLO. But it is not a policy that is consistently applied. Mr Douglas Hurd, minister of state at the Foreign Office, has confirmed that Britain is continually holding discussions with PLO representatives at ambassador level. Mrs Thatcher has not banned this practice. Why, then, did she pretend that her rebuff to the Arab League was based on some sort of 'principle'? Perhaps there was pressure from the United States. But the most likely explanation is that it was all her own work. (This was, after all, the same woman who indulged in 'principled' anti-fascist rabble-rousing during the Falklands while turning a blind eye to her own previous support for the selfsame fascist junta.)

What makes the Prime Minister's latest act of sabotage particularly tragic is that the Tories' record on the Middle East was far from discreditable. Lord Carrington and Sir Ian Gilmour were more sympathetic to the Arabs than any other Foreign Office ministers (including Labour ones) in recent memory. Francis Pym, too, has shown some awareness of the urgent need for a Palestinian settlement. The Arab League's visit to London, and Mr Pym's to Saudi Arabia, might have helped to strengthen Britain's position. Instead, yet again, Mrs Thatcher has shown that 'peace' is not for her a real priority. □

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End of the line for Britain's railways?

A GOVERNMENT REPORT envisages cutting the length of Britain's railway network from 11,000 miles to just 1,600 miles. The proposal comes in the report of a committee headed by Sir David Serpell, which has been examining the future of the railways. Copies were sent to transport secretary David Howell and British Rail chief Sir Peter Parker three days before Christmas; the report is not expected to be published until at least next week.

The Serpell report makes no recommendations but it does put forward eight 'options' for the railway network. Three of the options require a marginal cut, of about 300 miles. The 1,600 mile suggestion is the most draconian: above it is an option of 2,500 miles, and there are three further options spaced more or less equally between that and the marginal cut.

Only two of Serpell's three colleagues were prepared to sign the final report: they are P. Butler of Peat Marwick Mitchell and Lesley Bond of the Rank Organisation. The other committee member, Alfred Goldstein, felt that the proposals did not go far enough and wrote a minority report which suggests an even greater attack on the railways. For this reason the 1,600-mile option, which may seem implausible at first sight, ought to be taken seriously.

If the railway network were reduced to 1,600 miles only a handful of main lines would survive. The only station left in Wales would be Cardiff (even Swansea would go), while in Scotland the railway would stop at Edinburgh and Glasgow. Among other towns that would cease to have a station are Blackpool, Bradford, Cambridge, Derby (where British Rail's research and engineering centre is), Huddersfield, Leicester, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield, Sunderland, Weymouth and Worcester. For the thousands of holiday-makers who pack the trains from Paddington to the West Country each summer, the furthest they could go by rail would be Bristol. The argument about trains of nuclear waste would also disappear since Windscale would be over 20 miles from the nearest railway.

Until he started his inquiry, Serpell, a former chief civil servant at the Department of Transport, was a member of British Rail's board. He was also the main author of a BR policy statement in March 1981 which said that 'there is no serious doubt in anyone's mind that a railway network of major proportions is necessary to the efficient operation of the country.'

The reason for his apparent change of heart (1,600 miles do not represent a network of 'major proportions') is that Alfred Goldstein succeeded in hijacking the committee. Goldstein is a senior partner in R. Travers Morgan, a firm of transport consultants. He was by far the most hawkish member of Serpell's committee and was instrumental in getting the tougher options into the main report. It was all the more galling for Serpell and his colleagues that, at the last minute, Goldstein refused to sign the report despite all the compromises they had made to accommodate him. In the report's introduction Serpell complains that he did not know of Goldstein's decision until 9 December – just two weeks before the report went to David Howell.

The main difference between the majority and minority reports is over forecasting. Neither Serpell nor Goldstein trust British Rail's 20-year forecasts; but Goldstein also mistrusts Serpell's five-year forecasts.

Goldstein's minority report also attacks BR's management and engineering. He says that BR's civil engineers have an obsession with safety and that money could be saved by lowering safety standards.

The criticism of BR's civil engineering is based on a study carried out by Goldstein's firm for the Serpell inquiry – a study which cost over £100,000. The choice of Travers Morgan to conduct this study is surprising, since most of the firm's experience in this country is in building new roads (as is Goldstein's) and the 1982-3 edition of *Jane's World Railways*, which lists the major railway consultants, does not list Travers Morgan.

Goldstein's minority report (which unlike the majority report is lavishly printed and produced by Travers Morgan) constantly refers to the need for further studies: 'The Department should ensure that suitable professional expertise, in particular in engineering and operational research, is available to the Department to advise on the (BR) Board's progress.'

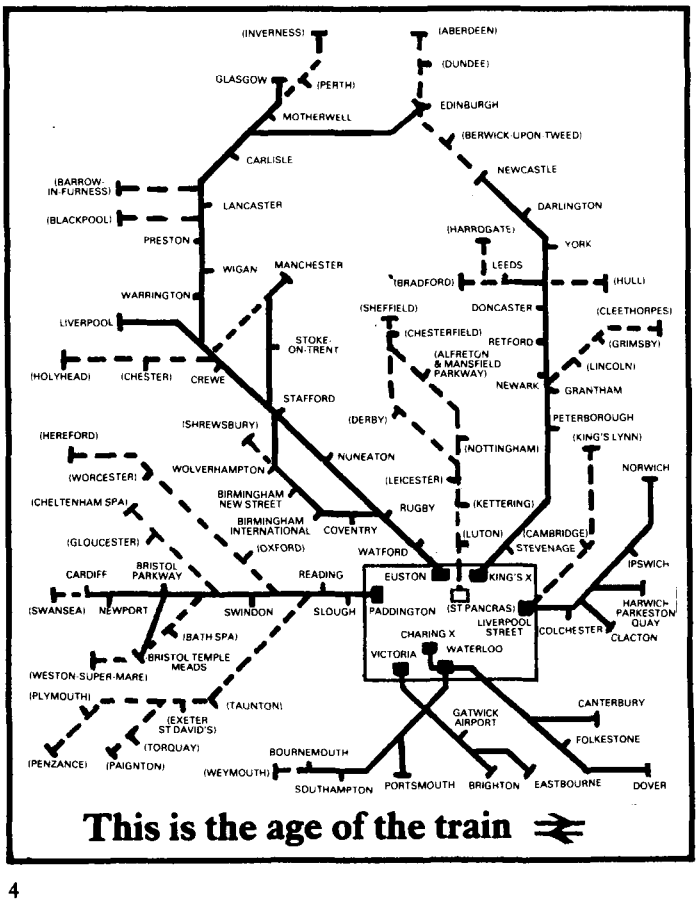
Goldstein is closely connected with Professor Alan Walters, Mrs Thatcher's personal economic adviser. Both Goldstein and Walters were previously involved in an attempt to get a £250,000 Department of Transport research contract. Despite the good connections of the bidders, secret minutes of a Department of Transport meeting which discussed the contract describe the Goldstein-Walters bid as 'a rather pedestrian proposal.'

The proposal for huge cuts in the rail network comes at a particularly embarrassing time for the government. Even though the one part of the country which will escape savage cuts is the south-east commuter belt, many Tory constituencies will still suffer. Jim Prior's line to his constituency at Lowestoft is fairly certain to go, however small the cuts. Moreover, Serpell advocates raising fares by 40 per cent in real terms to try to make commuter services break even.

Fearful of a political row, transport secretary David Howell is fairly certain to shelve the proposals (if he is still there after the reshuffle). But once Mrs Thatcher is past the next election the 1,600 mile network could become stark reality. Twenty-three years ago another Tory government hushed up another report on the railways. The author of the minority report made a savage attack on British Rail, proposing major rail cuts. The then minister of transport, Ernest Marples, made the author of this report chairman of British Rail. The person in question was Dr Beeching.

Mick Hamer

The continuous black lines show the *only* rail service which would be left in Britain if section 8 of the Serpell report is accepted. The dotted lines show the inter-city lines which would be closed down and the stations (in brackets) with them.



Invasion of the peace women

LAST WEEK's daring dawn break-in at Greenham Common air base is proof that spontaneity can work. Even a Ministry of Defence 'prohibited place', supposedly immune to terrorist attack, can be invaded without so much as a wire being cut.

Rumours had been around for a while that some kind of break-in was on the cards. Word passed along the grapevine and dozens of women arrived specially for the occasion. Although more journalists were included in the grapevine than some women wanted, the police had no advance knowledge.

Some of the 44 women who went over the 12-foot fence at 7.30 a.m. on New Year's Day, with aluminium ladders and scraps of blanket and carpet to hold back the barbed wire, had been camping at the base for months. But many were newcomers who had turned up for the weekend, drawn into the campaign by the excitement of 12 December, when 30,000 women 'embraced' the base, and 13 December, when 2-3,000 women blockaded the gates. Some of them had suspected that 'something might happen', while others simply wanted to see in the New Year by

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supporting the women at the camp.

Some of the participants had met for the first time that night, and most had never taken direct action before. But their sense of purpose was clear. Patrol cars drew up when only a handful were across – thanks to a thoughtful press photographer letting off a flash immediately – but the women scrambled determinedly on over the top and across the dark plain to their target, the giant silos still under construction for the cruise missiles.

Police stood nonplussed, making a few arrests, pulling away a few ladders, but nearly all of the women made it to the top of the nearest silo, where they danced in a symbolic circle, sang peace songs and whooped for over an hour before enough police assembled to drag them away. ▶

Pam Isherwood

On Monday they appeared, jubilantly, in court. They were charged only with breach of the peace, and the cases were adjourned until 14 February.

Jill Nicholls

MISCELLANY

Thatcher's leak

The identity of the new Director General of MI5, the Security Service, has been blown by Mrs Thatcher in the New Year's Honours List. He is Sir John Lewis Jones, whose identity is recorded in the award of his 'K' merely as 'attached, Ministry of Defence.' This, as the *NS* pointed out three years ago, is an open code for MI5. With the appointment of Sir John, Mrs Thatcher has restored the leadership of the Security Service to a career insider, and once again an ex-colonial cop. The previous incumbent was Sir Howard Trayton Smith, a former diplomat and Moscow Ambassador, who was appointed by James Callaghan. (It should be conceded that our unconfirmed identification in November of Denis Payne – a senior MI5 official who has been the Director of secret intelligence in Northern Ireland – was in error.)

Sunny side up

And a happy New Year to you too. 'Britain will start the year in vigorous and competitive spirits,' according to the authoritative prediction of *Old Moore's Almanack*. This is not to be sniffed at: *Old Moore* has been published every year since 1697, and is therefore a rather longer-established guide to our future than such striplings as the OECD or the Cambridge economists. For 1983, the *Almanack*'s predictions are as follows. January: 'The Opposition is likely to face renewed leadership problems' (surprise, surprise). February: 'The Irish question is likely to be the focus of intense debate' (ditto). March: 'Steps to reduce the UK's net contribution to the EEC's finances are indicated.' April: 'The Middle East is likely to see a stormy situation.' May: 'The Polish situation may take an important new turn.' June: 'Iran and the Persian Gulf will be the focus of new developments and difficulties to be resolved.' July: 'A general election campaign could be underway with polling mid-month' (hmmm . . .). August: 'Brazil is likely to suffer severe weather conditions.' September: 'Legal matters, judges, court and church could all be sources of disputes.' October: 'The USSR is likely to be in aggressive mood.' November: 'The national sewerage system is likely to come up for renovation.' After all this, in December 'Britain is likely to be in positive and celebratory mood'. Might that have something to do with the Christmas holiday?

Dr Owen's node

Positively the last word on *Old Moore*. Unnoticed by the capitalist press, an important development has taken place: after 285 years the *Almanack* has switched from the Tories to the SDP. In its 1982 edition it was still uncompromisingly Conservative: it reported that 'Margaret Thatcher's rising Saturn in Scorpio exactly conjoins and frustrates the Soviet's expansionary Jupiter in Scorpio', and added that 'the Iron Lady's determination and deep inner faith can act as a catalyst for . . . moral and spiritual resurgence'. But mark the sequel. In the 1983 *Almanack* we are told that the SDP-Liberal Alliance, although it is 'an impetuous union of desire and convenience rather than conviction', is nevertheless 'a party which at its highest level could bring together the best for a dynamic and thriving mixed economy'. The main problem seems to be Dr David Owen, whose astrological chart is most unsatisfactory: 'His Neptune sits on the MC. His Node on the rising Uranus is also likely to encourage the revolutionary and unstable aspect.'

Our Political Editor writes: This is what I've been arguing for years.

A monster dies unmourned

ON SATURDAY morning, Leeds Council will begin demolishing 1,247 flats at Hunslet Grange. Since tenants first moved in, in 1968, the flats have been beset by major structural problems which 14 years of council remedies have failed to solve. The final decision to demolish will be celebrated by tenants in other cities who expect that a further 2,500 identical flats will now have to be knocked down.

Hunslet Grange flats were part of a brave new housing scheme planned by a consortium of four councils, Hull, Sheffield, Nottingham and Leeds, who formed the Yorkshire Development group (YDG) in 1962. They commissioned a team headed by architect Martin Richardson to design a deck access estate, five to seven storeys high, using standard components but allowing a wide variety of flat and maisonette designs. At the time, the flats were seen as the best way of providing a lot of new housing using the maximum benefits of industrialisation. The builders of the flats were Shepherds, a large Yorkshire-based construction firm.

Tenants found damp from the day they moved in. In 1970 a Nottingham councillor questioned 'persistent dampness due to structural faults', but was assured by the chairman of the housing committee that no such faults existed.

Condensation was one of the main problems: YDG flats had concrete walls, which need regular and continuous heat to prevent condensation. What tenants needed was cheap heating, together with adequate ventilation and insulation. Instead, all four councils poured thousands of pounds into ineffective remedies.

In 1977, chunks of concrete fell from the Nottingham estate. The Nottingham housing department declared the building 'structurally sound'. As recently as 1980 the council agreed to spend £360,000 installing a complete new storage heating system, even though these heaters can actually exacerbate condensation problems and have patently failed to satisfy tenants. At the same time, Sheffield was conducting a major insulation programme but had ignored the problems of water penetration which were destined to ruin new insulation work.

In 1976 the other two councils, Leeds and Hull, decided to start legal proceedings against Shepherds, the builders. The High Court told them to go to arbitration, and in 1980 an out-of-court settlement was reached.

The cold, damp environment has caused many health problems. Dr Lata, who serves the Balloon Wood estate in Nottingham, says: 'Almost all chest illnesses are caused by dampness.' She also notices that, because of the damp and the horrendous heating bills (one mother of five had to pay over £500 last quarter), many people suffer from depression. There is also an alarming level of infant mortality.

The tenants' frustration led to the setting up of the Yorkshire Development Tenants' Action Group, which forced all four councils to re-examine the problem. First to react was Leeds, which decided to demolish on the grounds that the flats were a total social disaster. Nottingham also decided to demolish, on the basis of a lengthy report which found, among other faults, 'dangerous walkway and balcony panels, up to 20 times the permitted level of calcium chloride (which corrodes the steel reinforcement), supports to bridges in advanced decay, panel joints frequently wider than specified'. The estimate for repairs was £32,000 per flat, with no guarantee that the flats would not decay in the future. Sheffield and Hull are both dismantling blocks; they are investigating whether it would be at all possible to keep some YDG flats up, but it is likely that the cost will be extortionate.

Roger Critchley

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Bundled out of Britain

HOME OFFICE reference number K212778 will be dealt with at the Appeal Court on 12 January. The number stands for Mahmud Khan, who lives with his wife, Rukhsana, and four-year-old son Mahboob in Bradford. The Home Office wants him out of the country and statistically the odds are loaded against him, for the Home Office wins 94 per cent of such cases.

Locally there has been a lot of public support for Mahmud and his family, with public meetings, demonstrations, and a 24-hour vigil just before Christmas. Legal arguments are not enough to guarantee victory, but vigorous defence campaigns have rescued some people from deportation.

Mahmud came to Britain from Pakistan nearly 12 years ago to study at Leeds University. He married in 1975 and was granted permanent residence in the UK. After 13 months the marriage broke up and ended in divorce in 1978. Mahmud married again the following year. In July 1980 the Home Office decided his first marriage was a 'marriage of convenience entered into solely to enable him to obtain settlement', and it was now 'conducive to the public good to deport him'.

Marriages do break up, but for black or Asian immigrants it is a very different matter than for white British people. Mahmud was informed by the police that his first wife had 23 convictions for prostitution before his marriage to her. This information, which resulted from police investigations, when he applied for British nationality status, started his marital break-up, which, ironically, is now the basis of the Home Office's argument for his deportation.

Mahmud married again in 1979 to Rukhsana. Their first child, Mahboob, is now four years old, and a second child is expected in March. Rukhsana was given three months' leave to settle in the country and they married in good time, sending their passports as instructed to the Home Office.

Mahmud works as a Community Project Officer for the 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign in Bradford, but he has been treated by the authorities as if he were a criminal. On 29 August 1981 police came to his house and burst into the bathroom where he had to stop shaving to be rushed off to Armley prison in Leeds. He barely had time to put his trousers on. 'They didn't even let me retrieve my glasses. I'd been here ten years; they just told me "your time is over in this country".'

The Bradford Law Centre managed to contact his MP, Edward Lyons, and the order was halted before his flight, which had been arranged for just four days later. But Mahmud stayed in Armley prison for a month, before suddenly being whisked off to Heathrow with his wife and son. Half an hour before his flight he was given a document to sign, saying that he was leaving the country of his own free will. He refused.

The result was another three months in Armley jail. Released in December 1981, Mahmud had to sign on at the police station every day before noon or face a £200 fine and six months in prison. He signed nearly 300 times before regulations were relaxed; now it's just once a week.

'This is how it stands today. I don't know what they're hoping to achieve, tormenting me like this,' he said last week, hopeful that the hearing on 12 January will favour him. If he loses, the Home Office says it will take account of representations before implementing the deportation order on K212778.

Keith Lomax

Victory for DHSS staff

A FOUR-MONTH strike at the Birmingham and Oxford DHSS offices is likely to end this week with the government agreeing to a major review of staffing at social security offices throughout the country. The strike began in Birmingham after a social security officer broke down under the strain of work.

Staff have been cut back by 4 per cent in the DHSS between the end of 1980 and October 1982 while the number of supplementary benefit claimants has increased by 30 per cent in the comparable period. According to the Society of Civil and Public Servants the government failed to meet its own assessment of how many staff would be required in local offices to cover the demands of the work.

The unions wanted a 10 per cent increase in staffing at the Birmingham office (roughly 160 staff) and a larger percentage increase in the Oxford office.

On 22 December the executives of the main unions involved recommended a return to work from 10 January after the management revised their offer. That recommendation is likely to go to the strikers this Friday. The CPSA executive's earlier recommendation of a similar offer had been overturned at a mass meeting in November. Subsequently a one-day national strike in DHSS offices took place on 3 December. The CPSA were also beginning to consult on an all-out national strike in the DHSS when the management made some marginal changes to their offer.

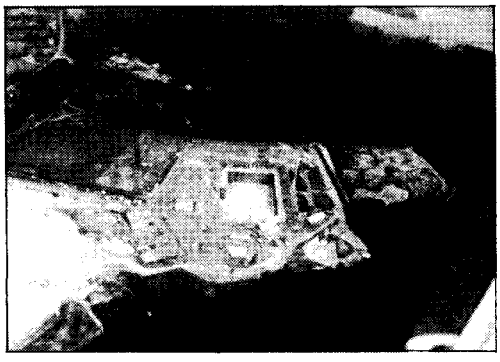
The most significant change is the management decision to withdraw certain strings in the agreement, thus allowing the staff the right to further overtime bans and industrial action over staffing levels. Earlier ingredients in the offer include an indefinite increase of Birmingham staff by 45 and of Oxford staff by 10. Better provision is also to be made for advance recruitment. But in the long term the most important concession may be the joint national review of staffing in DHSS offices, particularly in the inner cities. The unions are to play a full part in the review, which will visit local offices and study existing forms of work measurement. The report, which is to be completed by June, will be submitted to a DHSS Deputy Secretary, Norman Clarke. The review's recommendations will not be binding upon the DHSS management but it is expected that any recommendations will be implemented by October.

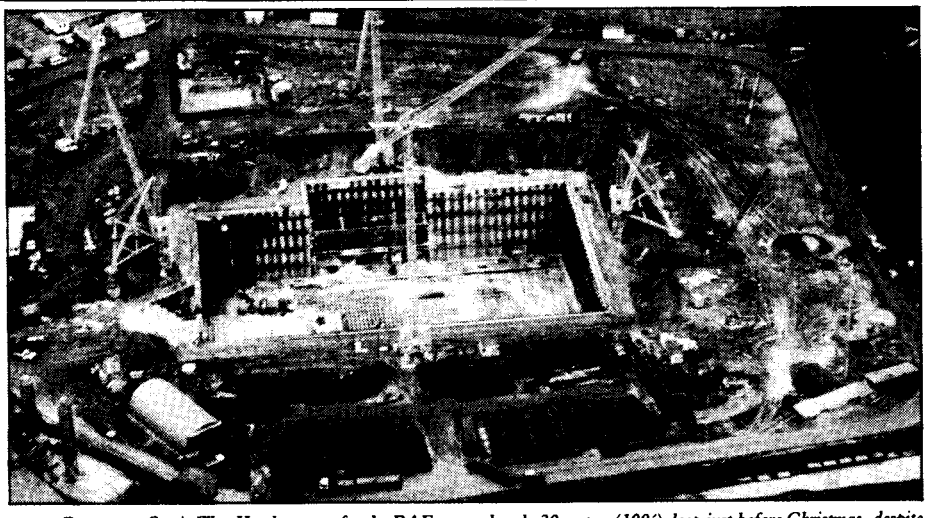
Local branch officials are critical of the role of their national leaderships, arguing that they should have given more enthusiastic backing from the start. Certainly it seems the Militant Tendency members on the CPSA executive were unenthusiastic about the dispute for some time since they were eager to keep the union's ammunition back for an expected national pay dispute in April. The strike is calculated to have cost the CPSA £250,000. CPSA members received strike pay worth half their normal wage. Attempts by members of the CPSA Broad Left to censure their supporters on the executive failed at their annual internal conference but the leadership's role is bound to be raised at the union's national annual conference.

If the strikers do return to work it is possible that the worst affected offices will not reopen to the public for up to 10 weeks due to the backlog of work. It is also possible that strikers will implement a severe overtime ban until they receive adequate staffing.

Patrick Wintour

Hole in the ground





The massive new excavation into the Cotswolds intended to provide a new Permanent Static War Headquarters for the RAF was already 30 metres (100') deep just before Christmas, despite the fact that a debate within the National Trust – in whose 'inalienable' land the hole is sunk – had only concluded weeks earlier. In fact, excavation of the 105,000 m^3 (3.6 million cubic feet) of soil had quietly begun in May, as soon as the Ministry of Defence got the agreement of the National Trust officers.

Examination of the pictures shows that the new bunker will be a five storey underground concrete box, with floors some 50m by 70m across (160 by 225'). When the construction is finished, some 15m (50') of earth will be piled on top, leaving only a big mound to indicate the site of the excavation.

Duncan Campbell

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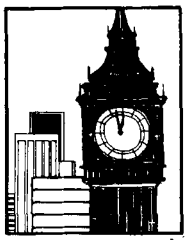

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

Could right-wing reforms help a left-wing government?

ROBIN LEIGH-PEMBERTON's appointment as Governor of the Bank of England has provoked a somewhat confused reaction on the Left. It is not one of your common-or-garden muddled confusions, but a choice confusion – one that goes to the heart of the problem of what a Labour government should do about Britain's bureaucrats.

On the one hand, there are those who are appalled that Mrs Thatcher has appointed someone in her own political image. Mr Leigh-Pemberton is an unashamed right-wing Tory. In the past it has been standard practice to consult the opposition about such an appointment, in order that the post is seen to be 'above' politics. Mrs Thatcher did not consult Michael Foot or Peter Shore over Mr Leigh-Pemberton's appointment, and had she done so, would not have secured their consent.

On the other hand, there are those like Robin Cook (one of Labour's Treasury spokesmen) who see in Mrs Thatcher's action an opportunity for Labour. By breaking with tradition she has opened the way for Labour to do the same. If *they* are going to appoint one of *their* lot to such a job, why shouldn't *we* appoint one of *ours* when we return to power? Far from decrying this break with consensus politics, we should welcome it – and, moreover, welcome the fact that it is a Conservative government that first broke with tradition. When Labour appoints a left-wing banker (if it can find one) in Mr Leigh-Pemberton's place, it will be difficult for the Right to cry foul.

According to Sir John Hoskyns, the former head of Mrs Thatcher's policy unit, one of the main reasons why radical governments of both Right and Left are frustrated in their ambitions is that the bureaucracy is staffed by people who lack the capacity or the will to execute radical change. As I argued last week, Sir John's diagnosis is similar in many ways to that of left-wing critics of the civil service, such as Tony Benn. To what extent should the Right and Left join forces over one of Sir John's main recommendations – that senior positions in the civil service should be filled by politically sympathetic people, rather than by 'neutral' career officials?

Sir John's main proposal is that ten to 20 senior officials in each government department should be specifically political appointees:

> Some of them would fill senior positions in the department. Others might work as policy advisers to the cabinet minister concerned. There is no reason why, in some cases, the permanent secretary should not be an outsider, with a career official as second permanent secretary, responsible for the day-to-day running of the department.

Sir John's subsidiary proposal is that there should be a new central department, consisting of up to 200 people, staffed mainly by outsiders, and responsible for overseeing the government's overall strategy.

In an ideal socialist world, or at least a competent semi-socialist Britain, Sir John's reforms would help overcome civil service resistance to radical change. The prospect of a few hundred committed, intelligent socialists working together in the higher reaches of Whitehall to implement Labour's election manifesto would indeed be a sight for sore ideologists.

COMMITTED, INTELLIGENT, working together . . . there's the rub. What if, instead, many of them are self-important, second-rate placemen, being rewarded for past loyalties, and/or conspiring for most of the time for their minister against others? That is exactly how much of the federal government in Washington functions: there, all the top jobs are political appointments. One does not have to be unduly cynical about the state of our own dear Labour Party to envisage the same dangers here.

The critical test for any reform is not whether it can succeed when implemented by the best people working for the best of motives, but whether it can be implemented by the second-best people indulging in their share of prejudices and backbiting. It is by this test, I fear, that Sir John's prescription would founder. The vast extension of patronage that he proposes would almost certainly lead to worse government rather than better. A slight gain in political commitment would be outweighed by the loss of the residual virtues possessed by most higher career civil servants – their experience, their intelligence and their practical competence.

This does not mean that a Labour government should not appoint politically sympathetic people to key positions (like the governorship of the Bank of England) – rather that political patronage should be used in a limited way for limited objectives. The larger ambition of ensuring the implementation of radical policies needs to be pursued by other means.

Two clear obstacles to effective reform can be identified and should be removed. The first is the lack of a clear strategy on how to use power: past Labour governments, with the partial exception of the 1945 administration, have started life with little real idea of what they intended to do, and how they intended to do it. The same mistakes look like being repeated between now and the next election: insufficient thought has been given as to *how* Labour would set about changing its links with the Common Market, or developing a non-nuclear defence policy, or persuading the clearing banks to change their lending practices. (One major exception is macro-economic policy. Yet even here success depends on securing the co-operation of the unions on pay; Labour remains stuck on how this can come about.)

Where Labour proposes to introduce new legislation, there is nothing to stop the party preparing a draft bill before the election, rather than waiting for the civil service to do it afterwards. By addressing the legal niceties in advance of office, it is more likely that pitfalls would be spotted; in addition, the drafting process would be put in sympathetic hands. Tony Benn has noticed the uses of this approach: he has drafted a bill to ban US nuclear bases from Britain. Chunks of his bill are taken from the legislation he introduced as Minister of Technology 16 years ago to ban pirate radio stations – he has simply substituted US bases for unlawful radio transmitters. There are probably better ways to draft bills, but it's a start.

The second major obstacle to radical reform is the secrecy with which senior civil servants cloak their manoeuvres to thwart muddled policies. When officials 'advised' ministers in the last Labour government that it was impractical to introduce a wealth tax, or to withdraw charitable status from public schools, nobody outside Whitehall was able to contest the validity of the advice, because nobody knew what that advice was. Conversely, when officials in the previous Labour government designed ways of justifying Concorde, or of helping oil companies to sidestep oil sanctions against Rhodesia, their words and actions were shielded from public scrutiny.

If these two obstacles could be removed, the chances of the next Labour government achieving its aims would be greatly improved. There are, of course, many other reforms that could usefully be applied to Whitehall – for example, to do with the recruitment and promotion of civil servants. *But the crucial reform lies in the attitude of parties and politicians seeking office.* Unless Labour's leadership constructs its own strategy for radical change, there is no reason to believe that the bureaucracy will provide that strategy – and, moreover, no reason why it should. □

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SIZEWELL INQUIRY

Nuclear power's uncertain future

Duncan Campbell and Colin Sweet report on the issues facing Sir Frank Layfield and his assessors as they start their critical inquiry

NEXT TUESDAY in the Maltings, at Snape in Suffolk, Department of Energy-appointed Inspector Sir Frank Layfield will open the Sizewell Public Inquiry. The inquiry into the proposed siting of Britain's first Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR) nuclear power station is expected to last well into the autumn.

At the same time, the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) has yet to complete its study of the CEGB's full safety case on the PWR and decide whether it will grant it a construction licence.

The decision to hold a public inquiry was the government's. Since Mrs Thatcher took office in 1979, the go-ahead for two new British-designed advanced gas-cooled reactors (AGRs), at Heysham in Lancashire and Torness in Scotland, has been given without debate. Abandonment of the 'safer', but allegedly more expensive AGR design is key to the second phase of the government's ambitious nuclear power programme.

When the Cabinet's energy committee decided (in October 1979) to go ahead with a major new nuclear programme, the hope was to build a new PWR every year from 1982. But in the last three years most of the keystones of this nuclear policy have been dislodged, despite the contrary impression given by energetic pro-nuclear campaigning.

The Inquiry starts against an unfortunate background. The objectors have been presented (at the last moment) with an extra mass of reports, Proofs of Evidence and assessments as part of the CEGB case. Much of this, adding to an existing 250 pounds (weight) of documents delivered in May, arrived just before Christmas – leaving little time for study before the Inquiry begins on 11 January. Independent, technically sophisticated groups of objectors, like Friends of the Earth, have been refused any public funding, despite the fact that the issues they propose to raise are clearly of 'public interest'. Yet the CEGB openly accepts that it has spent over £30 million already, in advance of the Inquiry.

Although the government has conceded the case for an inquiry, it is certainly not keen on the idea that the CEGB and its opponents should fight on anything like equal terms. The value of public inquiries for honest public debate on nuclear policy is already suspect, after the experience of Justice Parker's report on Windscale in 1977. Another one-sided non-contest at Sizewell is likely to channel opposition into more direct tactics.

ALREADY THERE are strong signs that the results of the inquiry have been prejudged by the CEGB. The pressure vessel itself has already been ordered from the French company, Creusot Loire (see Rob Edwards's report, *NS* 6 August 1982). Cancellation of the order now would invoke penalty clauses. As early as April 1980, the CEGB issued a 'letter of intent' to the National Nuclear Corporation, in effect placing the manufacturing order for the nuclear core of the Sizewell 'B' PWR. Last summer, despite protests, the CEGB began site clearance work for the PWR, even as Sir Frank Layfield was holding preliminary hearings for the Inquiry a few miles away. He said that he had no powers to stop it.

Leaked secret minutes of the critical 1979 Cabinet committee meeting made clear the government's basically cynical attitude to the process: while acknowledging that the 'first such (PWR) inquiry should be wide ranging' there was 'a danger that broad-ranging inquiry would arouse prolonged technical debate between different representatives of scientific opinion.' The government should seek 'appropriate presentation' and a 'low profile'.

But the government has had to face significant undermining of the key buttresses of nuclear power through the 1970s.

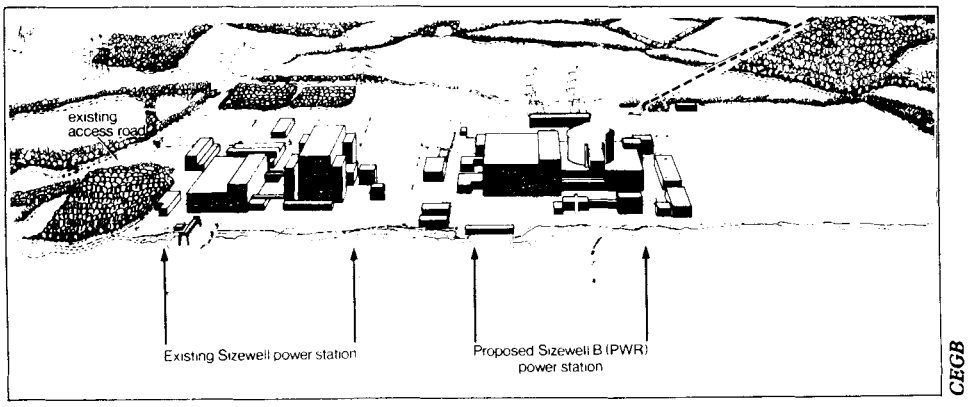
- The frequent use of overestimated energy demand forecasts has backfired. Now the CEGB is having to offer a variety of much more pessimistic 'scenarios'.
- The cornerstone of nuclear power ideology has been the plan to move eventually to a series of 'fast breeder' reactors. That plan has been shelved more or less indefinitely.
- The programme of one new reactor a year was necessary, it was claimed in 1979, to keep the industry at a 'viable minimum'. In 1981 (in the White Paper on *Nuclear Power*) that proposal became 'flexible'.
- The CEGB's main claim throughout has been that nuclear power will be cheaper. Objectors at Sizewell will claim that, as the House of Commons Select Committee on Energy reported in 1981, the 'CEGB's costings . . . are based on questionable and often unspecified assumptions'. Despite some improvements since, the costings are still not a basis on which Layfield should endorse the PWR programme.

THE MOST IMPORTANT factor about nuclear power is that people don't like it. Whether or not that is justified, it is the most important limiting factor in its development. Sir Herman Bondi (former chief scientist at the Department of Energy) made this observation in 1981, at a Royal Institution lecture. He was reflecting the experience of nuclear power both in Europe and the US.

In several countries, and several states in the US, acceptability has been tested by referendum. Direct political resolution of the nuclear issue however is not favoured, as yet, by any of the political parties in the UK.

A second possible test of acceptability is economic – whether the consumer is willing to pay for the product. This requirement is more attractive to the present government and is one reason why the economic argument has been advanced. It has the advantage that other public concerns, notably that of safety, can be subsumed in the framework of 'cost benefit' analysis. Given enough money, it is argued, any technology can be raised to acceptable levels of safety. The difficulties of using economists' models for decision making are, however, well known. It is the institutions on the 'supply' side of the industry rather than individual consum-

Sizewell from the sea: an impression of the proposed layout (with room for expansion)



CEGB

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Sizewell – the players

APPLICANTS

The Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) is applying for consent to build the station, under the 1909 Electric Lighting Act.

British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL) is responsible for the nuclear fuel cycle, the supply and removal of enriched uranium fuel rods.

The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) which comes under the Health and Safety Executive, has to issue a site and operating licence. They have now said they may not complete their assessment and issue the licence until after the inquiry is over.

The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) will give supporting evidence about the hazards of planned or accidental radioactive release.

Westinghouse and **Bechtel,** two US nuclear corporations, respectively have designed the PWR's steam-raising core and the associated power plant. Although objectors have asked for their personnel to attend the inquiry, they have not yet been represented.

The National Nuclear Corporation (NNC), which has been put very much under the wing of Sir Arnold Weinstock and GEC, is planned to be the reactor constructor. However, as a result of a continuing internecine struggle in the industry, it is likely that the CEGB will take over more and more of the construction management, if consent is given.

The Department of Energy will be presenting its case in support of the CEGB. Nevertheless, it is the Energy Secretary, Nigel Lawson, to whom Sir Frank Layfield will offer his final report.

Other government departments – Environment, Transport and Industry, will present supporting views. **The UK Atomic Energy Authority** has not so far appeared. With the virtual abandonment of commitment to a fast breeder reactor programme, UKAEA is rapidly becoming an institution without a purpose.

OBJECTORS

Friends of the Earth (FoE) will lead the objectors on the critical safety aspects of the PWR design.

The Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) and the **Town and Country Planning Association** (TCPA) will present criticism, primarily on economic, social and planning grounds.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) will put a case critical of the nuclear programme. **The National Coal Board** (NCB) is also intending to appear, but without taking sides.

The Greater London Council (GLC) opposes the Sizewell 'B' project on issues including the risk to Londoners of accidents, the transport of nuclear waste through London, and the employment and economic effects of going nuclear instead of adopting employment-creating alternatives – such as conservation or combined heat and power (CHP) schemes.

The Anti-Nuclear Campaign (ANC), with some trades union support, and the very active **East Anglian Alliance Against Nuclear Power** (EAAANP) have been bitterly critical of the decision to refuse funding to objectors, and have not fully decided on the extent of their participation. **CND** is also an objector. Local groups include the **Suffolk Preservation Society** and the **Stop Sizewell 'B'** campaign.

THE INSPECTOR AND ASSESSORS

Sir Frank Layfield QC is a Recorder in the Crown Court. He represented one of the Sizewell objectors – the TCPA – at the Windscale Inquiry. His two previous public inquiries have concerned London regional planning and local government finance. He has two assessors at present:

Dr J. Vennart, from Harwell, is a radiation biology specialist working for the Medical Research Council;

Professor Christopher Foster, a consultant formerly with the London School of Economics Unit for Research in Urban Economics, is a specialist in cost-benefit analysis.

A third assessor on engineering is to be appointed.

THE FIELD

The Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR) uses water under immense pressure to remove heat from the core of the nuclear reactor. It is pumped through steam generators, which provide steam to the electricity generating turbines. There will be two 660 Megawatt turbines at Sizewell B. The critical safety issues concern the liability to failure of the reactor vessel, made of steel unlike the British AGR design; the steam generators, where a failure in one of thousands of pipes could lead to a devastating accident if emergency systems were not available; and the containment, a concrete shell around the reactor intended to limit the consequences of an accident.

The acronym **SNUPPS** (Standard Nuclear Unit Power Plant System) is likely to crop up frequently in reports of the inquiry. It refers to the central nuclear reactor system, as opposed to the turbine generators and ancillary works.

ers that make the choices and fix the prices. Real costs are difficult to determine, and the trade-off between cost and safety is especially difficult to establish.

A public inquiry has the advantage for the government that it takes the issue out of the political arena. It gives time to examine the arguments and to test the direction in which public opinion may be moving. At the same time, the public inquiry itself takes no decisions.

But the imbalance of resources between the parties to the application and the objectors in this case is very large. It is made more extreme by the massive amount of documentation that the CEGB has produced. Without funds to employ specialists and lawyers, the objectors will be hard pressed to sustain an effective presence.

The most important problem in the inquiry is the uncertainty created by the overall nuclear programme, in which Sizewell is only the first stage. Normal inquiries are usually expected to arrive at a clear recommendation for or against a given local planned development. Sizewell is critically different – a generic inquiry with major implications for the economy and for security, as well as for the more immediate and narrow purpose of generating electricity. Because the generic inquiry is grafted on to the form of a local inquiry, it cannot be expected to produce such clear conclusions.

The history of nuclear power is one of disappointment and failure because the institutions that promoted it felt compelled to capture public support by making claims that neither took account of the untried nature of the technology, nor the uncertainty in energy markets. By using energy forecasts that were spurious in their supposed accuracy, the nuclear industry created the platform from which it has since been attacked.

In the US at least, this is now being recognised. David Freeman, Managing Director of the Tennessee Valley Authority – one of the world's largest nuclear utilities – wrote last November: 'What is killing it is not the Nuclear Regulatory Commission or the media . . . It is time to confess that we went too far, too fast in deploying large-scale designs of a reactor type we knew too little about.'

We in the UK are now invited to adopt the PWR, despite its lamentable track record in the US. Moreover, the chosen design was decided upon (after only three months' study) by the government-appointed Task Force working in something of a panic to find an acceptable design.

The original NNC (reference design) was based on a Westinghouse 1100MW reactor in Trojan, Oregon, which had a disastrous operating record. When the first finished NNC design was offered to the CEGB in April 1981, it was found to be much too costly in materials and was quickly dumped. A task force, led by Walter Marshall, head of the CEGB, was appointed to produce a new design. In *three months,* one was produced, based on the so-called SNUPPS (see box) installations at Wolf Creek, Kansas, and Callaway, Missouri. (Both were ordered in 1973, but neither yet produce electricity.)

When Walter Marshall appeared before the Select Committee on Energy before Christmas, he admitted that 26 major changes had been made to these SNUPPS designs. In effect, therefore, Sizewell will be just another prototype, like so many past and present British nuclear projects with their huge cost overruns. Marshall's claim that the reactor could be completed inside 5½ years is somewhat belied by the ten years that the more standard US designs have now already been under construction.

Despite the unsatisfactory background to the CEGB's application, all parties to the public inquiry, including the Department of Energy, will support a go-ahead. In the face of this pressure it is important that the scope of the inquiry is not narrowed. There are, as yet, no established criteria by which society can arrive at long-term decisions for technologies such as nuclear power. It would be a significant gain if the outcome of the inquiry reflected properly the element of uncertainty and risk which is the root problem of nuclear power acceptability.

Public opinion has hitherto been concerned primarily with the safety factor. In this inquiry however, the economic considerations will come to the forefront. The cost of introducing a new and large programme of reactor construction which could cost over £30 billion, in the present depressed condition of the economy, is politically controversial. ▶

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The CEGB's argument for the programme rests on three propositions. First, an expectation of rising demand for electricity. Second, net effective savings for nuclear against coal-fired stations. Third, reducing dependence on coal. Each proposition is dependent on a set of variables to which 'probability' tests have not been properly applied. The compounded risks of outcomes less 'optimistic' than those on which the CEGB's main case is based are large enough to make it unlikely that a decision should be taken on the evidence as presented.

There are also important features of nuclear power which are glossed over. In 1977, the CEGB supported the view, central to the Windscale Inquiry, that reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel rather than long-term storage would bring substantial future benefits to society. Today, in its application for Sizewell B, it has reversed this view and proposes to put the spent fuel into long-term storage. The reasons for this are not adequately explained.

Even more significantly, they now relegate the Fast Reactor to the next century. Once central to the perspective of the nuclear industry, this 'de-throning' of the Fast Reactor, has major long-term implications for the case for nuclear power. It receives but one paragraph in the Board's first Proof of Evidence.

BUT EVEN BEFORE the inquiry starts the perspective for nuclear power is changing radically. The present government, reasoning from its economic philosophy, is reorganising the energy sector by progressive steps of privatisation. The Energy Bill before Parliament, which can be expected to become law while the public inquiry is taking place, takes away the CEGB's monopoly power as the sole commercial producer and distributor of electricity. Privatisation is specifically extended to nuclear power. The same thinking is manifest in the Department of Energy's Proof of Evidence to the public inquiry. Decision making in the market is pushed to the point where *planned* energy supply, present hitherto in energy policy at least in name, is now dismantled. Energy conservation, as a government objective, is incidentally defined out of existence.

The total effect of the reconstruction now being attempted in the energy sector may be incoherent, but it is creating a climate quite different from that in which nuclear power was nurtured. There are portents in the Department's approach which suggest that the close, dependent relationship between the nuclear industry, the electricity supply industry and the government is being replaced by one less supportive of big nuclear programmes.

In the United States, no new reactors have now been ordered since 1978. Nuclear technology has relied from the beginning on *not* operating in a free market, starting as the handmaiden of nuclear weaponry, and sustained by the industrial and institutional interests thereby created. But the future of the nuclear industry itself is likely to be the most uncertain factor of all those which will be debated in the Maltings at Snape. □

IRELAND

Killings in Ulster

Mary Holland describes Catholic reactions to the recent series of killings by the security forces

THE PRIME MINISTER, Mr James Prior and Lord Gowrie have all denied, with varying degrees of conviction, the claims by Catholic politicians and Church leaders in Northern Ireland that a fundamental change in security policy has occurred in the province. Mrs Thatcher, succinct as ever, has dismissed as 'rubbish' the suggestion by the SDLP leader, Mr John Hume, that 'a section of the RUC and the British Army have now been authorised to shoot to kill anyone about whom they are suspicious'.

Very few people in Northern Ireland, on either side of the community, believe these denials. Among Unionist politicians it is now a matter for open congratulation that the police and the Army have at last been allowed 'to take the gloves off' in the fight against terrorism. On the Catholic side there is an equally general belief that the new tough policy is directly linked to the results of the election last October to Mr James Prior's Assembly.

With the exception of a handful of members of the Alliance Party, Catholic representatives have boycotted the new forum, but the government is determined that the Assembly will continue to function, at least until the British general election. For this to happen it must ensure that members of the Unionist Parties, who are by no means generally enamoured of the Assembly, continue to attend. The most effective way of keeping these Unionists happy, it is argued, is to be seen to be taking a much tougher line against Republican terrorists.

To many Catholics, particularly those living in Republican areas, it now seems that any member of their community who is thought to be acting suspiciously is fair game for the security forces. They have not been reassured by Mr Prior's recent comments. Speaking at Strabane, Co. Tyrone, on 14 December, the Northern Ireland Secretary repeated his statement that the RUC's special anti-terrorist squads had no licence to kill terrorists. 'But,' he continued, 'if people break through roadblocks and are suspected of being on missions which involve murder of other people, the police are bound to take measures which they think are necessary.'

Just how much latitude this allows to the police may be deduced from the fact that over the past two months seven people have been killed and two injured, either at roadblocks, or what seem to have been 'stake outs', where the security forces may have expected terrorists to appear.

● **11 November.** Jervais McKerr (31) Sean Burns (21) and Eugene Toman (21), all three members of the Provisional IRA, shot dead at a police roadblock two miles outside Lurgan, Co. Armagh. The incident took place at 9.30 p.m. A police statement some hours later, at 2.55 a.m., said that a green Ford Escort had been signalled to stop, had accelerated, hitting and injuring a policeman, and that other police opened fire on the car after it had driven off. The statement added that police in the area had been placed in a state of 'high alert' following the killing of three RUC men by a Provisional IRA bomb on 27 October.

Later, on the morning of 12 November, another statement was made that no weapons had been found in the car and that no shots had been fired at the police. By 3 p.m. the same day, most reporters had left the scene to return to Belfast, but those who remained were allowed to see the car. There were between 20 and 30 bullet holes in the driver's door and about ten more in the boot. Local politicians, demanding an inquiry into the incident, pointed out that this contradicted the police's emphatic statement that the car had been fired on from behind as it drove off from the checkpoint.

At the time it was generally accepted in the Lurgan area that this killing was revenge for the murder of three policemen by the Provisional IRA two weeks previously. The green Escort was well known as belonging to Jervais McKerr, who had been prominent in the H Block campaign during the hunger strike of 1981. The car had been used in hunger strike protests.

The funeral of the three men on 15 November was attended by 5,000 people. A local newspaper described the scene, as those going to the funeral were searched 'in dozens by the security forces'. The mourners included Catholic politicians vehemently opposed to the Provos, including members of the Workers' Party who have been their most unequivocal and consistent critics in the Catholic community. One of the bystanders commented, 'If there weren't any Provos in Lurgan up to now there sure will be after this.'

● **24 November.** Michael Tighe (17) shot dead and Martin McCauley (20) seriously injured at a farmhouse four miles outside Lurgan. Shortly after the incident the police stated that a routine patrol in the area had been confronted by two men holding rifles and had opened fire. A later press statement said that three rifles had been recovered but that no ammunition had been found. McCauley has been charged with possession of a firearm and conspiracy to murder.

Seamus Mallon, the deputy leader of the SDLP, called for a full inquiry and asked that police involved in the incident be sus-

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LONDON AND THE TRANSPORT BILL

London's traffic is a mess. And we all know it!

- Our roads are snarled up – and they're not getting any better.
- Fares on our buses and tubes are the highest in the world – yet the services are going rapidly downhill.
- Much of London Transport's system needs modernising – but the money's just not there.

We've seen that increased fares drive passengers away – and fewer passengers pay even higher fares for a worsening service.

Obviously something must be done to put things right. London needs, and deserves, a lasting solution to its transport needs.

WHAT IS NEEDED?

The GLC is responsible for London's transport. We've first-hand knowledge and experience of the capital's transport problems.

- London needs a better bus and tube service – at prices that Londoners can afford.
- London needs more jobs – and cheaper fares would attract more business back into town.
- London Transport services need the same subsidies as local British Rail services – then we'd have uniform fares for *all* Londoners.
- London needs to reduce accidents, pollution and traffic congestion – which would happen if people returned to public transport.

HOW WOULD WE DO IT?

The GLC has a 'Balanced Plan' which we consider conforms with our statutory duties and those of London Transport. And these are some of the benefits as we see it:

- it would be a move towards the integration and simplification of public transport in London
- it would improve efficiency
- it would result in future savings
- it would see an end to the unacceptable cycle of higher fares/fewer passengers
- it would give London Transport the stability and some of the money it needs to modernise
- it provides for a reduction of fares costing the same as an average 25% fares cut and an increased use of London Transport.

We believe that this would go a long way towards meeting London's transport needs. And it reflects our determination to keep the best interests of the ratepayers to the fore.

WHAT ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT?

The Government also has ideas. They were outlined in the White Paper on the same day that a new Transport Bill was published.

Both show that the Government simply doesn't understand what London's real transport problems, let alone needs, are.

But how could they, considering how fast they're pushing their proposals through?

Their proposals *do* give provisional guidelines for public transport subsidies – but they're based on a number of serious misconceptions. A system based on these guidelines would not allow the desired simplification and integration which could only be achieved by a reduction in fares.

WHAT DO LONDONERS THEMSELVES SAY?

A recent independent survey showed that a majority of those interviewed thought that more subsidy – resulting in lower fares – should be found for London Transport. The present subsidy is about 27% while most other cities in the world average something like 50%.

In fact central Government only contributes 3% to the running of London Transport – the rest comes from London's ratepayers and farepayers.

The figures speak for themselves.

We believe:

- the Transport Bill and provisional guidance do not recognise London's problems and needs.
- if we were to follow the Government's guidelines the whole public transport system would continue to decline.

We believe that these are matters that should not be decided by central Government but by those elected by Londoners to speak for London as a whole. That is what we understand by local democracy – and that is what is under attack.

IF YOU AGREE please send the attached coupon to your MP or, better still, write asking him or her to oppose the Transport Bill.

TO: The Member of Parliament FOR _____
House of Commons, Westminster, London

I call upon you to oppose the Transport Bill unless it is amended and ask that the Government gives adequate subsidy to assist the GLC in providing a transport system that meets Londoners' real needs.

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____ Signed _____

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pended for its duration. This request was refused. David Calvert, the local Official Unionist Assembly representative, congratulated the police and commented, 'Actions are more important than words.'

● **12 December.** Seamus Grew (30) and Roderick Carroll (21), both members of the INLA, shot dead after refusing to stop at a police checkpoint at the Catholic Mullaghcreevie Park housing estate outside Armagh. The incident took place just before 8.30p.m. and local residents reported hearing between 20 and 30 shots. A police statement issued after the incident said that a car, identified as belonging to a known terrorist, had been signalled to stop, and had accelerated through the checkpoint. Another police car in the area was radioed to give chase, and forced it to stop. The driver jumped from the car and the police, believing he was about to open fire, shot him. A later statement said that no weapons or ammunition had been found near the car.

Within minutes of the incident a local priest, Fr Patrick McDonnell, arrived on the scene. He had had a telephone call from the estate that there had been a shooting incident and that a priest would be needed. On his way to the car a policeman told him that Grew had been shot but gave no details as to how it had happened. On his arrival Fr McDonnell found Carroll slumped face down in the driver's seat and Grew's body in a pool of blood outside the car. There were 13 bullet marks in the passenger door of the car. Fr McDonnell performed his duties as a priest and then returned home. It was only when he saw the news on television later that night that he learnt that the two men had been shot by the police.

A woman resident of the housing estate told the *Irish Times* that, just prior to Fr McDonnell's arrival, she had been driving down Mullaghcreevie Park when she saw a stationary car with its lights on and both front doors open. A man wearing a heavy navy pullover and carrying a handgun told her to turn off her lights and reverse back the way she had come. She did so.

This case aroused particular interest because six Catholic priests in the area issued a statement saying that they were aware that death threats had been made to both Grew and Carroll by members of the RUC and the Ulster Defence Regiment. One of the priests had been involved at an incident at a UDR checkpoint when such a threat was made; had remonstrated with the UDR man in charge; and had been told to go about his business. These allegations about death threats were repeated by Cardinal O'Fiach, the Roman Catholic Primate whose diocese includes Lurgan, in a New Year interview on Irish radio last Sunday.

On 5 December Grew and Carroll were given a full paramilitary funeral. The funeral service was in Armagh Cathedral. Catholic church leaders and politicians united to demand a full inquiry into the circumstances of their deaths. The local Unionist MP, Harold McCusker, commented, 'I really do believe that we are now living in almost mutually exclusive communities.'

● **27 December.** Patrick Elliott (19) shot dead by soldiers after a robbery at a late night chip shop on the Andersonstown Road in West Belfast. He and a companion had entered the shop and pointed their hands in their jacket pockets to give the impression that they were carrying guns. One of them robbed the till and both then ran out of the shop. Police said that a passing Army foot patrol had seen the two men running away and had opened fire. Elliott was killed and the other man escaped. Elliott had a criminal record for robbery, theft and riotous behaviour going back to 1978 and the police say that at the time of his death there was a warrant out for his arrest. There is no suggestion that he was involved with any paramilitary organisation. No arms were found on or near him. He was shot five times, probably at a distance of about eight feet. Local politicians of the SDLP and Alliance Parties have called for an inquiry. His mother commented, 'While he had been in trouble, he did not deserve to be shot dead.'

● **29 December.** Kieran Leonard shot and injured in a field outside the village of Donagh in Co. Fermanagh. The police said that an army patrol had found bomb-making equipment and wire in the field, had seen Leonard and had challenged him to stop. He ran away and they opened fire. The local Sinn Fein MP, Owen Carron, claimed that Leonard had been taking a short cut through the field from his home to a pub in the village which he frequented. Two days after the incident, at a special hearing in the hospital where he was being treated, Mr Leonard was charged with possession of explosives with intent to murder. The Rev. Ivan Foster, the local Democratic Unionist Assembly member, congratulated the Army on their action.

For people living in Northern Ireland, attitudes to these incidents are conditioned, almost completely, by the fact of their belonging to one or other community. There are Protestants who disapprove in principle of the security forces operating under what appear to be dramatically different restraints to those which have traditionally applied. In practice, however, they tend to point to the Ballykelly bombing in which 17 people were killed, and the continuing toll of deaths. They believe that tougher measures against terrorists have led to a measure of renewed calm. In these circumstances, even liberal Protestants are not too bothered by the questions raised by the incidents described above, and most of their political leaders have been unequivocal in their approval of the security forces' activities.

Catholics, who are more likely to find themselves on the receiving end of the firing line, have been united in their condemnation of the killings. This does not mean that they approve of the activities of the Provisional IRA or the INLA, but they approve even less of the RUC and the British Army shooting Catholics. If killings of this type continue unchecked the political costs on the Catholic side are likely to be such as to outweigh any gains which tougher security measures may achieve in the short term among Protestants. □

SOCIETY

Sex and socialism

Jon Cook makes a plea for a new politics of sexuality

WOMEN HAVE BEEN arguing with increasing conviction and evidence that male sexuality constitutes a serious social problem. Rape is only the most threatening manifestation of a predatory milieu in which image, attitude and fantasy are so orchestrated that men's sexual pleasure becomes a necessary condition of their power over women.

The historical origins of this masculine connection between pleasure and power are described differently by different writers. Andrea Dworkin, in her book *Pornography*, argues that the connection is as old as patriarchal time itself, the prime mover of our culture for 2,000 years and more. The French historian, Michel Foucault, sees a sexuality grounded in domination and submission as a matter of more recent origin:

> Sadism is not a name finally given to a practice as old as Eros; it is a massive cultural fact which appeared precisely at the end of the eighteenth century, and which constitutes one of the greatest conversions of Western imagination . . .

These divergences are, of course, more than just theoretical quibbles. They raise the question of the historical character of sexuality itself, of the extent to which our sexual being has changed over time and of what causes it to change. One kind of history (and it seems to me that Andrea Dworkin's book comes close to this) tells us that the current pattern of our sexuality is what always has been and that nothing short of an apocalypse can change it. That voice has to be respected, but also disagreed with.

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Will Self

For it is a premise of any *politics* of sexuality that it seeks to bring into the realm of choice and practice what seems least chosen and unchangingly 'natural' in us.

Change, here, means learning; and it is men who have most to learn. We could begin by recognising that the spectre of male sexuality doesn't only menace women, but messes *us* up, too (although in less brutal ways). The sexual code promoted by the fantasy images of *Playboy*, or page three of the *Sun*, cultivates a notion that men's sexual relations with women are to be defined in terms of success or failure. Success means mastery. The mastery of the man's gaze over the images of fantasy translates into the mastery of his body over the woman's body in fact. This sadism has been a convenient sexual idiom for inducting adolescent males into a competitive and isolating ethic.

Our language betrays us: we know women by 'having' them. 'Failure' occurs when fantasy and fact do not coincide. Trapped by the requirements of success, failure becomes inadmissible. In that sense, most men's sex lives are based on the deception of self and others. But it's when the phallic machine breaks down that a different relation with women becomes possible, one that recognises women not as objects to be sexually dominated, but as beings with desire and sexual need. The problem is, of course, that the furious clanking of the phallic machine drowns out the possibility of that different relation, defining it as 'failure'.

My suggestion, then, is that men must change their relation to sexuality, not least because the current model divides us from women. It is a machine grown out of date and dangerous. But talking about change in this area is easier than actually changing and this, in turn, bears upon the nature of a *sexual* politics. It is unlikely that a new quality of sexual relations between men and women can be brought about by legislative fiat. In the case of men, we shall have to dredge up those parts of our past which the very obsession with sexual success and failure have suppressed. This will mean, amongst other things, unlearning men's reticence about personal feelings, which our own culture defines as a sign of masculine authority. The conditions for such a process of change cannot be found in parliamentary debates, or mass meetings, but in some therapeutic practice which will be conscious of its wider political obligations.

All this connects with the currently troubled relation between men and feminism. One doesn't have to be long among men (even good socialist men) to come across a fear and hatred of feminism – while, among feminists, there is a deal of reasonably grounded fear and hatred of men. These are not propitious conditions for dialogue and it may be that there is none to be had. Feminists can, I think, reasonably be asked what they want of men. The answer may be that they don't want much to do with them at all. But it may be something different. Men will certainly be incapable of responding if they cannot listen to what is being said. My sense, though, is that we shall not be able to listen if we cannot break free from the rule which tells us that we must 'succeed or fail' with women. The consequence of that rule is that men either go away and sulk – because any criticism, however reasonable, is regarded as a rejection – or, conversely, we engage in a contorted self-abnegation, feeling that to be

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a man is to be one of the damned, that the only admissible success is to disappear like the Cheshire cat.

At this juncture, a set of complicating considerations arise to do with the relation between a politics of sexuality and the traditional goals of socialism. The two kinds of politics – socialist and sexual – are not necessarily incompatible, but they're not necessarily identical, either. Major movements of social change have not been led by groups which have given a high priority to the enhancement of sexual pleasure. There has been, and still is, an important kind of political commitment which is based upon asceticism. More immediately, the promotion of sexual pleasure remains one of the few growth industries in the fitful world of late capitalism. Sex manuals and blue movies testify to an ideology in which an obsession with sexual variety diverts us from the need to protect and advance other freedoms. Moreover, the historical rhythm produced by the work of women and men to change the form of a state or an economy is unlikely to coincide with the rhythm which brings about change in sexual relations.

A contemporary radicalism rightly demands change across a wide range of issues, and attempts to stress the connections between the sexual, the economic, and the political elements, which the dominant culture denies. But the result can be an unnerving confusion in which everyone insists that their issue be on the top of the agenda, that we all be given awards at once. That danger alerts us to the need for priorities, but that need does not mean, as it has done in the past, the *demotion* of feminist demands. That demotion is based upon a regressive identification of women with sexuality.

An opposite identification is needed by a contemporary socialist politics.

It must recognise that women's demands for access to economic, political and cultural power are a priority, and not least for the good socialist reason that women in this country constitute a significant proportion, if not the majority, of the proletariat. If there is some dim recognition of this fact amongst cultural circles on the Left, it remains depressingly the case that the central institutions of the Labour movement are committed to masculine authority – not so much out of inertia as from a more *active* resistance to the demands of women. The conservatism of trades unions and the Labour Party in this regard seems to me an important reason for their present disarray and inability to articulate the popular will.

At present, British culture and politics abound with terminal signs. The aggressive stupidity of Thatcherism, the fascistic devotions of the Falklands War, the stench given off by a decaying and authoritarian state, can all prove hard to bear.

The danger with the politics of sexuality is that they can become a way of escape, a means of whiling away the last few hours. This is particularly so because sexuality is an obsessive subject, one that can usurp other kinds of thought. If that is not to happen, we must remember that history won't hang around and wait while we complete ardent discussions in crowded rooms. □

PRIVACY

Unprotected data

Michael Meacher MP finds the new DP Bill badly wanting

THE MOST SURPRISING thing about the Data Protection Bill just published is that it was brought forward at all. The Home Office was dead against its central provision, that every user of automatic data processing systems holding information about identifiable individuals must, in future, register with a registrar appointed by the Crown – even though the UK remains the only major Western country without such safeguards. The government had already twice turned down a Freedom of Information Bill, of which a Data Protection Bill is essentially a corollary; and pressure to conform to the clumsily-named Council of Europe convention for the protection of individuals with regard to automatic processing of personal data (which the government had signed but not ratified) had got nowhere.

Two factors changed this. One was the increasing complaint of British industry. Thus, the commercial director of Lucas insisted that the UK was losing exports through lack of safeguards and that, if the 1978 Lindop Committee Report on data protection was not implemented quickly, 'the British balance of payments will suffer dramatically'. The Swedish Privacy Board, for example, refused to permit information about Swedish citizens to be processed in Britain because of the complete lack of privacy safeguards.

Then, in April last year, the *Sun* ran an exposé of my private life – after purloining private and confidential records about me. My agreement to this had never been obtained and, duly outraged, I complained at Prime Minister's Question Time in the Commons. Mrs Thatcher concurred and promised legislation to stop such practices.

The origins of the Bill, however, reflect its weaknesses. It meets the commercial objectives, not the civil liberty ones. First, it applies only to computerised data banks. Manually stored data is outside its scope. This is an extremely serious omission when the damage that may be done to an individual from abuses of record-keeping is just as likely to occur in a manilla folder as on computerised tape. The information may have been collected unlawfully; or be inaccurate, incomplete, out of date, irrelevant; or access may be given to other people improperly; or the information transferred to a use which the individual would never knowingly allow. Indeed, most complaints now come from parents about school records on their children, from employees about references, from patients about doctors' files and from clients about social-work records. Almost all of these are manually stored.

The government's objections to extending the new protections to manually stored data are ones of scale and enforceability. Neither objection is conclusive. On the question of scale, either extension of data protection coverage to manual records could be kept to a later stage, or the inclusion of manually recorded data could be restricted to those cases where its use would be sensitive, for example medical records. On enforceability, it can hardly be said that this constitutes an insurmountable barrier when there will have to be extensive exemptions in the computerised area, too, with the development of home computers and other forms of new information technology.

The second main defect of the Bill lies in the derogations which – despite improvements since the April 1982 White Paper (Cmnd 8539) – are still drawn too wide. It is true that national security is the only ground on which exemption from registration can be claimed. But the Bill excludes inspection rights for individuals not only from computer systems dealing with the prevention and detection of crime, but also with immigration controls and tax assessments. Police intelligence gathering will remain exempt from inspection where it is judged that it would prejudice the prevention and detection of crime. No provision is made, on the Swedish precedent, for the appointment of a duly authorised, security-cleared officer to check that data thus shielded from access by the person concerned does not contain such irrelevant, but potentially damaging, allegations as that the subject is anti-apartheid, anti-blood sports or gay (as was found in the Cornwall-Devon Special Branch files before John Alderson had them shredded).

There is also a further blanket clause in the Bill permitting the Home Secretary, subject to obtaining an order in Parliament, to remove the citizen's right to inspect personal information (e.g. on medical and social records), but only where the disclosure of such information is already prohibited or restricted by statute, as for instance in adoption cases. However, before Britain can ratify the European convention on privacy, the Home Secretary will have to decide what extra restrictions should be placed on the collection of information about a person's race, religion, politics, physical and mental health, sex life and criminal convictions.

A third major drawback of the Bill is that the confidentiality of personal records, far from being guaranteed, will be systematically breached by the authorities themselves. Paragraph 17 of the White Paper says that 'registered data users who make information available to the authorities in connection with these matters will not be required to register such disclosures of information'. In other words, the comprehensive filing system on every individual in the country now being assembled on the vast MOD-X computer at Mount Row, Mayfair, will be regularly fed with personal details from other government departments and from outside computer records *without the individual being aware of it.* ▶

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There are several other weaknesses in the Bill which water down its civil rights safeguards. It only requires computer *users* of personal information to be registered, not actual computer systems, so that the Home Office can be registered as one 'user' though it operates at least 15 major national systems holding personal data. The Bill gives powers of inspection to the Registrar who will run the system. But with only 20 staff allotted him, it will inevitably become much more a complaints system than a systematic inspection one – and who apart from a very few will be able to articulate the right complaint? Nor does the Bill regulate the means of collecting information; electronic eavesdropping is not, for example, made an offence as it should be. Big Brother is arriving just in time for 1984. □

MEDIA

Tribune's troubles

Francis Beckett on Mr Silkin's next move

TRIBUNE COUPS and counter-coups, which began in confusion, look like ending up in court. A fortnight after the 9 December shareholders' meeting, where John Silkin and allies demonstrated that 135 votes were stronger than 20, *Tribune's* worker directors convened a sudden board meeting, which allocated 450 shares to the staff.

Silkin, a lawyer by trade, thinks their action is illegal, and will almost certainly test it in the courts. The share proposal was not on the notice of meeting – it was a closely guarded secret. The only board members present were two members of staff and Michael Meacher MP (another, say the staff, took part 'by telephone'). Silkin also questions the propriety of two staff representatives, a working majority of those present, voting themsleves control of something which is, legally, shareholders' property.

So socialists are likely again to find themselves glaring at each other across an unfraternal court, competing for control of a 7,000 circulation newspaper with £40,000-worth of debts. How could it happen?

Editor Chris Mullin's answer at least has the merit of simplicity. A 'rich and ambitious politician' has used capitalist methods to stifle press freedom and muzzle opinions with which he disagrees. Unlike Mullin, Silkin hasn't given his analysis publicly – he plans to do so around the time of the 13 January board meeting. He may well ask whether *Tribune* has forgotten that socialism has enemies outside the Labour Party too. Sixteen out of 39 items in the year-end *Tribune* (31 Dec.) attack Labour spokesmen; on the front and back covers the score is 5 out of 6.

The break from the 20-year editorship of Dick Clements, now adviser to Michael Foot, has been sudden. One week in May, the paper broadly supported the Tribune Group and Foot's leadership: the next it opposed Foot and declared the Tribune Group 'dead'.

Tribune was to have a new basis for existence. At the Labour Party conference it launched a Friendly Society, billed as both a solution to the financial problems and a way of democratising the paper. It was neither. It raised little more than £3,000.

It was bound to inflame the big shareholders who, like Lord Bruce, had not been consulted. But the siege mentality in the *Tribune* office was growing until, in the days before the 9 December shareholders' meeting, demands for support were even being issued to the Tribune Group, which *Tribune* had declared dead. After that meeting, it became like a bunker. Ashen-faced staff occasionally emerged to issue bulletins. The next issue of the paper was filled with detailed and bitter invective about the enemy.

It claimed that Silkin and Co had been prevented by wiser shareholders from getting rid of all four worker-directors (two were kept). In fact, Silkin and Co had enough shares to do anything they wanted. They could have voted John Golding onto the board if they'd felt like it. In this feverish atmosphere the plan to wrest control from Silkin by issuing 450 shares to the staff was hatched, and on 23 December implemented. Signals from the bunker are next expected on 13 January, when the board meets.

WHAT do Silkin and Mullin think is at stake? Mullin may believe press freedom is at stake, but it isn't. He broke with a long editorial association with the Tribune Group, and the editorial policy of the paper is purely and simply his. So Silkin can only properly be said to be attacking press freedom if by press freedom you mean the absolute, untrammelled authority of an editor.

What is Silkin's motive? Does he believe the general election could be affected? *Tribune* has a tiny circulation, and the more obsessed with internal Labour Party affairs it becomes, the more certain it is that its readers will consist of the committed. Anyway, *Militant* and *Labour Herald* will continue to say the same things about the Labour leadership, and their combined circulation is bigger than *Tribune's*.

On the other hand, because of its history, because Michael Foot was once editor, because currently its news values, so far as the Labour Party are concerned, mirror Fleet Street's, it will be heard more there, quoted more, and could do more electoral damage than either *Militant* or *Labour Herald*.

But Foot, though he accused Mullin of 'infantile leftism' (and has been weekly taunted in *Tribune* for it) is said to take the view that Mullin ought to be left alone: he will bankrupt the paper, so the argument goes, and then a rescue can be launched. Silkin wants to launch the rescue now – but that could do more electoral damage. His reputation, as a member of the shadow cabinet, has its importance: and if there is a newsworthy court case, it can be undermined on a much larger stage than *Tribune*. But it's almost certainly too late for any of these considerations. It may have been too late from the moment that Mullin and Bruce failed to speak to each other in August when Bruce first raised his doubts about the paper's financial and editorial health.

Now, raucous challenges in *Tribune* and in public statements all seem designed to ensure that Silkin is forced to fight to the bitter end. And for what? If Silkin wins, his troubles are just starting: he reckons that to make the paper viable and give it a proper relaunch he needs about £100,000, and he will no doubt have to take his begging bowl round the unions for it.

If Mullin wins, he will, sooner or later, have to face the fact that he cannot survive in the tiny market-place already dominated by *Militant* and *Labour Herald*.

If he does not face this reality – and with all his commitment and hard work he seems to have the flexibility of the Empire State Building – and at the same time fails to improve his relationship with the unions (especially his landlords, the TGWU), he will bankrupt the paper. □

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THIS ENGLAND

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☐ Mr Leigh-Pemberton may also have that independence of mind, so valuable in a central banker, that comes from Eton and Oxford, from possession of a country estate and from the Lord Lieutenancy of Kent. – City Comment in *Daily Telegraph* (Miles Pitts-Tucker)

☐ The Department of Classics at Manchester University has made a name for itself in recent years for its single-minded devotion to obscenity. – *Times Literary Supplement* (S. D. Bailey)

☐ The sight of Diana hopping off a plane from Aberdeen with glittering diamond and ruby drops dangling above her cardigan, sets a whole new trend for the younger generation. – *The Times* (Josephine Dollmayer)

☐ Nurses, not by any means the best paid workers in Britain, are a pretty philosophical lot when it comes to putting up with their lot . . . Many even regard it as fun juggling with their slender resources as they save or borrow for the luxuries of life. – *Yorkshire Post* (Audrey C. Marlow)

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DIARY

Christopher Price

Mrs Thatcher's most salient characteristic is turning out to be a ruthless determination not only to destroy Labour power in the trade unions and local government but, simultaneously, to achieve totalitarian control of Britain's Establishment quangoes. For her, it's all part of being 'resolute'. Candidates suspected of being Tory wet or even vaguely independent are disqualified. They must be loyal – 'one of us'. The pattern has been building up for some time. Donaldson to the Master of the Rolls, Rees-Mogg to the Arts Council, David Young to the MSC – and now we have a mowing machine salesman as Governor of the Bank just because he was once a 'reliable' county councillor in Kent. Her only real disappointment seems to be Robert Runcie who – for a Thatcher appointment – is being hopelessly lax in controlling his turbulent priests who give comfort to the Greenham Common protestors and actually preach a gospel of Christian peace. 'Turning the other cheek' is bowdlerised from her Bible. I warn Runcie to remember Thomas à Becket and watch his back in 1983; she will find it intolerable to have an important quango like the Church of England exercising an independent voice in the year of her self-appointed election triumph.

○

The quango chairman that got away is Peter Newsam, the excellent appointment of Willie Whitelaw and Tim Raison to the Council for Racial Equality. It must have been difficult to find a Thatcherite anti-racialist and, anyway, Willie has never agreed with his leader's totalitarian aims. There was also a bit of old boy (or rather old person) locker room network in the appointment, which was sanctioned by Janet Young, Mrs Thatcher's favourite cabinet chum. Janet and Peter and Tim all played rugger together at the Dragon School in Oxford.

○

Tim's task for 1983 – apart from continuing to throw scores of non-white immigrants out of Britain each week – will be to convert the Data Protection Bill into an Act of Parliament. It is soon to be debated in the Lords and will arrive in the Commons after Easter. If we have an October election, he won't have time to get it through without making further concessions. In spite of changes already made which have delayed its introduction, it does not go nearly far enough to satisfy the civil libertarian lobby; yet it has already gone too far for the police. But the argument will not just centre round the police and the security services. The Bill is partly about access by the data subject (that's you and me) to things people write about us; and the most fervent opponents of this are doctors and social workers. It is intolerable, they feel, that we should ever have a right to see our own files. I hope both professions reconsider their attitude. I get a steady trickle of single parent mothers who are first denied access to their children in care and then told by their social workers that these children are to be recommended for adoption and oblivion. All they want to know is, 'Why?'. I think they should have the right to find out.

○

If Marx returned to earth today, I'm sure he'd characterise our professionals as his new bourgoisie. They are becoming a dangerously privileged class. If to their existing privileges of index-linked pensions and sabbaticals are to be added greater freedom from accountability than that enjoyed by ordinary mortals, the resentment will fester; and if the accountability of the professionals to the people is not to be achieved through the clumsy US device of litigation (which just entrenches professional lawyers) then we must have a better framework of law which guarantees openness as well as competence. The Data Protection Bill could prove a useful start.

○

I congratulate Nick Grant on his appointment as Labour's press officer – a daunting task with Conference policy pointing in one direction and the NEC in another. I hope the New Right on the NEC will let him expound those policies with which they disagree. The Right – at least those who are

members of the shadow cabinet – already have paid personal assistants to promote their wit and wisdom; and these folk also seem to have time to spare for surveillance of the Bennite Left – an activity which caused a little flurry of interest in the PLP just before Christmas. They should eschew such demeaning tasks and look on their jobs as much the same as Nick Grant's – to help their lords and masters translate Labour's programme into rather more compelling English than that in which it is written, while keeping faith with the spirit of Conference resolutions. If they want some help, they should re-read some of Nye Bevan's speeches in Michael Foot's biography, through which I've been browsing over Christmas. Worthy and able as each and every member of our front bench is, they could all use just a tiny bit more Bevanite eloquence and fire.

○

Though most of the Prime Minister's New Year Message was the usual empty rhetoric, there was one sentence with which I did wholeheartedly agree: '. . . where questions of freedom and justice are concerned we are uncompromising.' She's right, you know. Uncompromising in support of our NATO ally Turkey, whose junta imprisons its former prime ministers and tortures any intellectual or trade unionist who dissents; equally resolute in support of US-backed repression in El Salvador. Indeed, had it not been for his fatal Falklands invasion, the Prime Minister would have remained one of General Galtieri's uncompromising admirers. We had a few words from her about freedom and justice in Poland; but in their heart of capitalist hearts, both she and her new Governor of the Bank must be mightily relieved that, after the Jaruzelski clampdown, there is now some promise of a return on the capital our banks have lent them. The truth is that, where freedom and justice conflict with her own vainglory, she is uncompromising in opting for the latter.

ROGER WODDIS

Loving arms

'Sooner or later these weapons are going to get into the hands of irresponsible people.' – The Rt Rev. John Bickersteth, Bishop of Bath and Wells.

The world is divided,
  Like sprites in a wood,
Between the malignant
  And those which are good.
The dark and the evil
  Are alien powers;
The totally harmless,
  Thank heaven, are ours.

The Church has a mission,
  The truth that it spreads
Will fend off the fall-out
  From innocent heads.
A four-minute warning
  Of funeral bells
Is all that is needed
  To save Bath and Wells.

As options are narrowed,
  The Bishop expands
On devilish weapons
  In barbarous hands.
Responsible missiles
  Are those we possess,
And civilised buttons
  The ones that we press.

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Banks on the brink

David Blake analyses the way in which international banking has come to its present crisis

THE INTERNATIONAL DEBT crisis is over, at least according to the new Governor-designate of the Bank of England, Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton. 'The new Governor is a man who is two or three years ahead of his time,' according to a senior Treasury official with a less sanguine view of the world.

For the past four months the world's major banks have been in ferment as they realised that they were owed around $350,000 million by developing countries, many of which have no prospect of being able to pay anything back. The crisis has been building for a long time. Developing countries went heavily into the red at the time of the first oil crisis in 1973 and have stayed there ever since. The advanced industrial countries have had a respite in the past year as oil prices fell. Developing nations have seen no such relief. The prices they receive for their raw materials have fallen because of industrial recession in the West. The interest which they pay on their loans has gone up, because the western nations have been trying to use 'monetarism' to fight inflation.

Just how serious is the problem? Both for the countries in debt and the banks it is unquestionably very bad. There are five countries which face annual debt servicing payments which are higher than their *total export earnings*. The interest bill alone for countries such as Brazil is around 40 per cent of their export earnings. Just 24 hours after Mr Leigh-Pemberton announced that the debt crisis was over, the Brazilians unilaterally announced that they would postpone repayments of about $4,400 million which they are due to pay back during 1983.

For the banks, the problem is even worse. The leading American banks have outstanding loans to the developing world which are twice as large as their total capital. If there is a major spate of defaults and these loans have to be written off, the banks will be insolvent. Nor is the problem confined to the United States. For example, the Bank of Tokyo, Japan's largest, has managed to lend the equivalent of 80 per cent of its total capital to the country – Mexico – which sparked off the current crisis by letting the world know that it could not meet its obligations. How did the banks get into this mess? What will happen next? Does it matter for the world if a few banks get their fingers burnt?

THE ANSWER TO the first question is fairly easy. The countries wanted to borrow the money and the banks had it to lend. Ever since the oil shock of 1973, the major western banks have been the conduit through which OPEC countries with big surpluses have channelled their money into the world's financial markets. Countries such as Saudi Arabia are wary of getting too involved in where their money is lent. They much prefer to place it with the Chase Manhattan, or some other big bank, and let the bank worry about where to lend it. Western governments have been pursuing economic policies which have kept the industrial countries in almost permanent recession since 1973. Since then many western borrowers have either not wanted the money (because they could find no profitable way of investing it) or have failed to meet the banks' rules for good investments.

In recession, quite a lot of companies go bankrupt. This has reminded bankers that there are risks in making loans and that if you end up too heavily committed to one borrower you can be in trouble. Until this year none of these rules, however, seems to have been applied in lending to developing countries.

One important reason for this is that nations have not 'gone broke' in the post-war world. This means that the banks have never before had to write off any part of their loans to nation states. The result is that this lending has looked more profitable, and safer, than loans to institutions within a country. Advertisements in financial magazines are full of borrowings by obscure power companies which are 'unconditionally guaranteed' by the government of their country. What no one in the banks seemed to have asked was who guaranteed the guarantors.

A second factor behind all this has been the extraordinary lack of information which the banks have required. Nobody *really* knows just how much short-term debt Brazil has at the moment – estimates range from $11,000 million to $30,000 million. Because the banks have carried out many of their operations from offshore banking centres, where there is little supervision, they have lost the protection which tighter rules would have given them. Tentative efforts have recently been made to start pooling information, but it is bedevilled by suspicions that banks are trying to pass on their dud loans to each other.

FINALLY, BANKS got involved in something which they all now regret because of the way in which they are run and the way in which international loans to developing countries have been put together. Since the American banks started to move onto the world scene there has been a race for profits and growth. Because the domestic American economy has recently been able to boost banks' turnover by only about ten per cent a year, there has been a desperate search for other ways to grow. The people at the upper levels of American banks have made their corporate names with the huge expansion of profits and turnover which moving into world markets allowed.

How bank lending has grown

	% change*			Total end-1981 ($ billions)	U.S. banks' % share of end-1981 total	
	1979	1980	1981		All	9 large
Developing countries	25	20	17	331.3	35	23
Non-OPEC LDCs	32	24	20	258.5	36	23
Mexico	33	38	34	56.9	38	20
Brazil	17	18	16	52.7	32	20
Argentina	91	49	25	24.8	34	21
Korea	59	39	19	19.9	45	28
Chile	67	51	43	10.5	55	31
Philippines	47	27	9	10.2	53	36
Taiwan	7	21	22	6.6	75	47
Colombia	62	30	17	5.4	51	36
Thailand	31	9	27	5.1	32	21
Malaysia	18	19	67	4.4	22	19
Egypt	22	49	35	4.4	27	20
Peru	5	8	9	4.4	45	24
Turkey	4	11	−3	4.2	34	21
OPEC countries	9	8	5	72.8	32	22
Venezuela	48	17	8	26.2	40	27
Algeria	18	−0	−8	8.4	16	11
Indonesia	−0	8	−16	7.2	33	27
Nigeria	52	30	34	6.0	19	15
Ecuador	19	24	16	4.5	47	27
Eastern Europe	20	9	2	71.5	11	7
Soviet Union	−0	3	21	16.3	3	2
Poland	27	2	−6	15.3	13	8
East Germany	26	16	8	10.7	9	6
Yugoslavia	34	26	3	10.7	25	15
Hungary	15	1	−4	7.7	15	9
Romania	52	31	−12	5.1	7	5

Includes effects of exchange rate changes.

Source: Morgan Guaranty Trust Company

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Even quite small banks got caught up in the fever, thanks to the invention of the 'syndicated loan'. Suppose a country wants to borrow $100 million. It will ask one of the big international operators to *manage* the loan. But very little of the money will actually come from that bank. Instead, the loan will be hawked around other banks, asking them to take (say) a $5 million stake. Since many of the banks involved are likely next time to be knocking on its door asking for a similar favour, the managing bank usually has little trouble. All that remains is to put an announcement in the financial press saying that the loan has been fixed and giving the names of the banks who took part. These 'tombstone' advertisements are unusual, because they only appear when all the goods have been sold.

Even after that, the banks on these lists often sell off part of their loans to even smaller banks. The net result is that, in the case of Mexico, there are around 160 banks who have to agree to any package of measures, none of whom know the whole picture. The fact that the international lending led by the big banks has, in effect, been financed by a gigantic chain letter has meant that 'everyone's business is nobody's business'.

The warning signs have been growing for some time. Some countries, such as Zaire, got into such a mess that the banks were forced to 'reschedule' their loans – a polite term for putting off repayment to the indefinite future. Economic chaos and political problems in Poland caused a crisis there, with default (a formal declaration that you cannot pay) only narrowly averted. But the real crisis broke in late August when it suddenly became clear that Mexico did not have the cash to pay loans which were falling due.

Since then, the banks have turned seriously to the International Monetary Fund to solve their problems. The IMF has little money of its own, which is why Sir Geoffrey Howe, just made chairman of its main decision making committee, is flying to Saudi Arabia this weekend to try to borrow more. But even if Sir Geoffrey gets the money, the IMF cannot itself take over the banks' role as the main source of international finance. All that the IMF can do is to provide some money and persuade the banks that it has talked the countries into pursuing such careful policies that they are good lending risks. Doing this will test everyone's nerves. IMF packages usually mean big cuts in government spending, tough measures to reduce living standards and slower economic growth. Mexico's growth rate is likely to fall from eight per cent last year to three per cent in 1983, implying an even bigger drop in living standards. So far things have gone well for the banks. The new Mexican government has brought in an austerity programme. Argentina's economy is in such an inflationary shambles that the government wants to impose deflation.

BUT IT LOOKS like being a long and nerve-wracking process for everyone. Austerity programmes are always easier to start than to carry through; and a new mood of caution by the banks means that countries have much less incentive to co-operate with the IMF. For the real reason for countries wanting to stay on good terms with their banks is to borrow more money. But the banks now want them to start paying some of the money back. The great risk to the banks is that they will push too hard and drive some country into thinking that it might just as well refuse to pay back its debt, because it will never be able to borrow any more money anyway.

What does this all mean for the world economy? One conclusion is clear. The less developed countries will contribute less to world demand in the coming years, making the recession in the West even worse. Morgan Guaranty, one of the most highly respected American banks, reckons that if lending to developing countries is cut back to a level where they get no *new* money, but just keep existing loans ticking over, this will knock three per cent off the growth rate of the developing nations and between a half and one per cent off the growth of the industrial world.

That is if things go well. If things go badly, there could be a progressive collapse of the banking system, as one developing country default leads to a major bank collapse, leading to further collapses. That is the abyss into which the governments and central banks of the West have been looking for the past three months. So far, in the US at least, they have been prepared to do what is needed to keep out of it. The US Federal Reserve has been pouring money into the domestic American banking system, which helps in two ways. American banks have enough money to go on lending and interest rates fall, thus easing one of the main pressures on developing countries.

IN A FUNNY WAY, the less developed countries may have saved the rest of us. Governments have a soft spot for banks which they rarely show for the rest of the economy. Seeing the real prospect that developing countries might drive the banking system into destruction has set off a new wave of thinking about the need to have a properly managed world economic system. There is now much talk of major world economic initiatives, which will in practice soften the monetarist drive undertaken by most western governments through the 1970s.

Saving bank shareholders, who have sat back and collected the profits from risky lending over the years, is a perverse kind of motive for switching to more expansionary policies. However, in the USA, which remains the cornerstone of the world economic system, it seems the issue on which it is easiest to get the authorities to act. By cutting interest rates and pumping cash into the system, the US Federal Reserve are undoing the monetarist policies which brought the industrial countries into recession. Doing that is better than not doing it. But it would be a great deal more sensible if the industrial countries could get their financial systems to function stably, without first having to bring the entire world economy to the brink of catastrophe. □

THE VATICAN

Rendering unto Caesar

John Earle reports on Vatican attempts to restore financial respectability

Rome

IF THE HOLY SEE is to recover its financial credibility in 1983, it will have to go beyond mere window dressing in the affair of the collapsed Ambrosiano group and the late Roberto Calvi. The role of the Instituto per le Opere di Religione (IOR) in Italy's biggest banking crash has done as much harm to the Roman Catholic church's image in the world as Pope John Paul's extensive travels have done good. The Vatican has made known it is preparing a reform, as part of which the Italian government will press for a new relationship between the IOR and the Italian banking system.

At best, the men running the IOR are a strangely inept team. Most people are less charitable. Since the summer, a Milan magistrate has been investigating charges of complicity for fraud against Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, the IOR's American chairman, and its lay executives, Luigi Mennini and Pellegrino de Strobel. Marcinkus, 60-year-old son of a Lithuanian-born window-cleaner from Cicero, Illinois, has been with the IOR since 1968.

It seems that they learned little after getting their fingers burned in the Sindona affair. In the early 1970s, Michele Sindona, now serving a 25-year prison sentence in New York State, was chosen by the Holy See to help diversify abroad its Italian holdings in companies such as Societa' Generale Immobiliare which, *inter alia*, built the Watergate complex in Washington. When Sindona's empire collapsed in 1975, the Vatican lost its investment in a number of his banks and companies. The links with Calvi date back to those years. He was an associate of Sindona, and in due course invited Monsignor Marcinkus to sit on the board of the Ambrosiano's offshore subsidiary in Nassau, Bahamas – an unusual position for a Roman Catholic bishop.

Now a six-member commission formed by the Vatican and the Italian government is to discuss Italy's claim for $1.2 billion against the IOR. Most of the money, the Italians maintain, was lost by a group of Panamanian front companies owned by the IOR and manipulated by Calvi. Its disappearance was enough to cause Banco Ambrosiano of Milan to be put into liquidation last August.

But the Vatican refuses to admit any liability, portraying itself as the victim of an 'occult design' by Calvi who tricked it, unknowingly, into legal ownership of ten Pana-

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manian companies. It admits that the IOR acknowledged its ownership in letters given to Calvi, though it has not explained why the IOR did so, nor that this was part of an ambiguous operation whereby Calvi in return issued letters absolving the Vatican bank from any responsibility.

After several months' silence, the Church has started to counter-attack. Cardinal Joseph Krol of Philadelphia, for instance, complained in an interview in the United States that the Bank of Italy had apparently failed to discover any irregularities at Banco Ambrosiano during the Calvi régime or, if it did so, had kept them secret.

In Rome this caused surprise, to put it mildly. It is common knowledge that Bank of Italy inspectors went through the books of Banco Ambrosiano in 1978 and that what they found led to Calvi's prosecution and a four-year sentence in July 1981 for currency offences. He was at liberty pending appeal when the IOR saw fit to give him the letters acknowledging ownership of the Panamanian companies on 1 September 1981.

The full ramifications of the Ambrosiano-IOR transaction will probably remain as mysterious as the exact circumstances of Calvi's death under Blackfriars Bridge in London last June. Where did the millions go in this strange partnership between Roman Catholic dignitaries and the interests that Calvi represented in the secret P2 Masonic Lodge? In financial speculation, in corruption, in bolstering right-wing politicians in Latin America, in supporting Solidarity in Poland?

No one will say, now less than ever as Italy and the Vatican get down to hard but delicate negotiations. The most popular forecast is that the Vatican will in the end pay up $200 to 300 million. In addition, Italy's balance of payments will be helped by pilgrim spending during the suddenly proclaimed Holy Year opening in Lent.

At the same time, reform is promised at the IOR. Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the Secretary of State, has said preparations are under way for 'a better and more efficient organisation' of the Bank. He will have the advice of a committee of four Catholic lay financiers. The IOR, it is generally recognised, needs to return to its original purpose of administering assets 'for works of religion and Christian piety in all parts of the world'. Already controversy surrounds the appointment to this committee of Hermann Abs, head of the Deutsche Bank under the Nazis.

The large-scale syphoning of *lire* abroad by wealthy Italian Catholics in contravention of foreign exchange regulations can hardly be construed as a work of Christian piety. The Italian treasury hopes to plug this loophole by insisting that, for *lire* dealings, the IOR sets up a branch on Italian soil, subject to Bank of Italy supervision.

And the Archbishop? In a compromise settlement, it is taken for granted that any threat of legal action will be dropped. But his position may be resolved before that, if the Pope decides to confirm him in his other, now temporary, appointment as Governor of the Vatican City State. That carries a Cardinal's hat. And Cardinals have immunity from prosecution by Italian courts. □

NEW ZEALAND

Political heavyweight

Barry Wilson reports on the rise of a Labour leader

NEW ZEALAND HAS a new heavyweight political star. He is David Lange ('longey'), 40, who is favourite to win the leadership of the opposition Labour Party next month and, in view of the state of the parties and the polls, likely to be NZ's next Prime Minister within 12-18 months.

Ex-minority rights lawyer Lange is tough, eloquent (at least by NZ's standards), liberal, idealistic, inspiring. But the outstanding thing about Lange – or, at least, the first thing everyone tells you about – is that he is, or was, enormously fat.

Obesity is becoming characteristic of NZ Labour leaders. Former Prime Minister Norman Kirk weighed in at well over 21 stone. But he was big all over, standing nearly 6ft 3ins tall. Lange is under 6ft, but six months ago he weighed 27 stone.

'There was nothing wrong with me. I just ate too much. Last year I decided to do something about it. I studied surgical techniques and, six months ago, I underwent six hours of surgery to install a new plum-sized stomach. I don't get hungry any more.'

Lange is now down to a waif-like 18 stone and plans to level off at 14 stone for the next election. His next hurdle is to win the Labour Party leadership from the earnest but uninspiring Bill Rowling, who was Prime Minister from the time that Kirk died in August 1974 until landslided out of office in November 1975 by Robert Muldoon.

Rowling took a long world-travelling winter holiday earlier this year to 'reconsider my position'. This was read as a holding resignation and claimants began jockeying for position immediately. But Rowling stunned colleagues and insulted the pretenders by announcing, on his return, that he was the only man in the party with the experience to lead it. The Wellington *Dominion* cartoonist caught the spirit of this with a triumphant Rowling showing off his badges of experience – three straight electoral defeats.

Lange first made his name in NZ as an aggressive defence lawyer working in the poor Kaikohe district, which has a big Maori population. No one has ever questioned his liberal credentials. He stood for parliament in the Otaholu by-election in March 1977 which was seen as a test of the party's revival after the battering from Muldoon in November 1975. Lange campaigned well and won a famous victory – on the strength of which he was shot into the deputy leadership little more than two years later. His worst tactical mistake was to accept the advice of supporters and stand for the leadership against Rowling in 1981. This caused bad feeling, and was blamed for the party's very narrow failure to tip Muldoon out in November of that year.

But, according to most NZ commentators, Lange's time seems to have come. He is the only man in the Labour Party who can stand up to the bruising, paranoid Muldoon in debate. On his regular trips to Britain, 'Piggy' Muldoon hardly lives up to his gross antipodean reputation. He is mild and innocuous – seeming clearly out of his depth. Bullfrogs like Muldoon thrive in small ponds. But Muldoon is personally disliked in NZ – and there's quite a lot to dislike. He reserves his coarsest comments for his own Cabinet colleagues, whom he holds collectively in undisguised contempt. He told a recent party of visiting foreign journalists: 'I'd know them all with their trousers down' – an obtuse reference to their bumboy toadying to himself.

1981: Lange pre-surgery visiting Westminster

COI

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But Muldoon is a good political operator. He probably won the last election on the strength of his *de facto* support for the 1981 Springbok rugby tour of New Zealand: rugby is a religion in NZ like nowhere else in the world. David Lange says: 'His attack on those who opposed the tour was a deliberate ploy; an attack on those with unusual lifestyles. It was a fostering of intolerance, a dangerous political game but a vote winner.'

It is not long since New Zealand was perceived as a homely bastion of easy-going consensus. The Savage/Fraser Labour Governments of 1935-49 created one of the first welfare states. Racial prejudice – against the ten per cent Maori/Samoan population, virtually all in the North Island – was allegedly abolished; as was unemployment. Living standards were among the highest in the world. It was a rural idyll with its small family farmers among the world's most successful producers and exporters. The old happy complacency was sponsored by dull, pompous conservative governments in the 1950s and 1960s. But, by then, economic problems were mounting – and emphasised by a booming Australia. Urban New Zealanders, who have long considered themselves more socially progressive and intellectual than their brassy cousins across the Tasman Sea, were opting for new lifestyles.

The Kirk Labour government, elected in 1972, promised a reversion to old consensus values. But the impressive Kirk died suddenly, after 20 months in office, and, at the end of 1975, the country opted for accountant Muldoon and his promise of firm economic recovery.

Muldoon has never been the hardline right-winger painted abroad. Indeed, his non-ideological pragmatism has created a strong right-wing opposition in his own party (which, to date, he has effortlessly outwitted). For a man elected for his economic wizardry, his record is not very good. The country has run a current account deficit for each of the past nine years. In the past three years, NZ has accumulated a net borrowings (after repayments) of over £1,000 million, which puts it pro rata in the biggest league of international borrowers.

But this makes Labour's task on the economic front very difficult. Muldoon is an interventionist. This year he is dishing out subsidies and tax concessions worth £400 million to ailing farm industries. He is also injecting large sums in his Think Big projects, aimed at creating homegrown energy and basic industries, and unemployment remains low by international standards. His heavy promotion of the recently signed CER (Closer Economic Relations) with Australia is also aimed at economic growth.

David Lange is often accused of not being interested in economics at all, and he hardly denies it. His sights are on other priorities: tolerance; appreciation of the quality of lifestyle that New Zealand can offer; anti-consumerism; the development of awareness of the shared history with the Maoris. His style is generous and inspirational. It is a measure of the man's stature that he has been able to communicate this return to idealism at a time of economic recession. □

ROMANIA

A history lesson?

Judy Dempsey on the mid-life crisis of a Socialist Republic

35 YEARS AGO last month, King Michael of Romania was summoned from his country retreat in Sinaia to the Royal Palace in Bucharest. He had just returned from attending the wedding of Princess Elizabeth in London. At the Palace, he was presented with an abdication document by Petru Groza, the Prime Minister, and Gheorghiu-Dej, the first secretary of the Romanian Communist Party. It was said that as long as he remained in Romania 'there would always be trouble'. The King hesitated. The Palace telephone lines were cut and communist troops surrounded the building. Groza warned him that 'there will be bloodshed, civil war perhaps, but the responsibility will be yours'. King Michael signed. So was born the Romanian People's Republic.

For the last 17 years, Nicolae Ceausescu has been running what is now called the Socialist Republic of Romania. For the past two years, there has been a growing sense of chaos and uncertainty.

There are three reasons why, after 35 years, Romania is likely to be an unstable country for the rest of the decade.

Until recently, Romania deemed it sensible to have 'liberal' emigration rules to correspond with its 'liberal' image abroad. A Bonn-Bucharest agreement, signed in 1978, allowed 10,000 Romanians of German stock to emigrate annually. (A German minority of 35,000 still remains in Romania.) That safety valve has now been cut off. A decree signed by Ceausescu in November now only allows Romanians to leave the country provided they pay back to the state, in hard currency, the cost of their education. For a doctor, this would cost at least £6,000. The problem is that no Romanian citizen is allowed to hold hard currency. Ceausescu, desperate for hard currency (the debt owed to Western banks is over $10 billion), is hoping that both the United States and Bonn will 'buy' would-be emigrés. The decree could in fact be counter-productive for Romania. The US has already hinted that the renewal of MFN (Most Favoured Nation) status for trading purposes, which was granted to Romania in 1975, might not be extended.

The emigration decree wouldn't be so bad if the domestic economy was not in such an obvious shambles. One Romanian economic expert has remarked that the citizen's ration in Romania today is less than that what the Jews in Romania received during the War. Mihail Botez, a 41-year-old mathematician and political analyst, who was sacked from Bucharest University in 1977 for his political views but still remains in the country, argued that 'unless the pattern of governing is changed, Romania may be heading towards a catastrophe'. Few officials will even discuss, let alone acknowledge the food problems. They simply refer to a speech made by Ceausescu in October 1981, when he said that new food regulations would have to be introduced to improve the diet of the people, who were too fat anyway.

The only immediate 'solution' offered to alleviate the food crisis and the shortcomings in agriculture, which has been neglected for 20 years, is the rotation of officials. A pattern has emerged in which, every two months, ministers, party secretaries and officials are sacked or reshuffled – both to serve as scapegoats for the country's ills and, more importantly, to prevent any opposition power-base from building up within the party apparatus.

ONE SAFETY VALVE, though on the wane, remains. Nationalism. Exploiting the deep and intense anti-Hungarian and anti-Russian hatred shared by most Romanians, the authorities have, in recent months, put more pressure on the almost 2 million Hungarian minority in Transylvania, in an attempt to deflect attention from the economic and social situation.

The past year has seen a series of anti-Hungarian polemics, emanating from Bucharest. Mr Ion Lancranjan's book *Cuvint despre Transilvania* (A Word on Transylvania) – a vicious attack on the claims that Hungarians were the first to inhabit Transylvania – sparked off criticisms from Budapest itself. In a mood of desperate self-defence, the samizdat publication *Ellenpontok*, edited by Hungarians in Transylvania, argued that the Romanian authorities were plotting 'the final solution for the Hungarian community in Transylvania' and claimed that the Ceausescu regime was 'fascist'. The authorities reacted by detaining ten Hungarian intellectuals from the region, including the well-known poet Geza Szocz.

In any case, given Romania's acute energy problem, Ceausescu may be forced to reorientate his foreign policy more towards the Soviet Union, or at least more directly towards COMECON. In 1981, Romania had to import over 1.2 million tonnes of oil from the Soviet Union and had to pay for it in dollars. The recent murmurings from Bucharest about Romania's actual participation in COMECON suggest that Ceausescu may be looking for much closer links with the rest of the bloc. The terms of such a relationship could well be spelt out when a COMECON summit meets in early 1983.

Altogether, not a happy 35th anniversary. But, for the moment, Ceausescu and his entourage of family supporters seem secure in the Royal Palace (into which he moved a decade ago). He can always retreat to his country residence at Sinaia if things get serious. So far, nobody has suggested that, so long as he remains, there will always be trouble. Maybe that's because all the telephone lines are controlled by Ceausescu's family and the Securitate. □

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LETTERS

Greenham's uncommon women?

Nicolas Walter, London N1

Your leading article (*NS* 17 Dec.) takes a dangerously and even mischievously short view of the Greenham Common demonstrations.

To say that 'women there have entered a national debate in their own right and on their own terms' suggests that women have somehow been excluded from the nuclear disarmament movement until now; to say that 'the women's civil disobedience is firmly based in deeply held moral convictions' and that this has prevented arrests suggests that this is a new element in the movement; and to say that the imagery of the demonstration on 12 December was 'alien' to men suggests that this is an unfamiliar and welcome development.

To put the record straight: women have been involved in the movement on a free and equal basis throughout its existence, and have played a prominent part in its organisations and activities; non-violent direct action and civil disobedience based on deeply held moral convictions and involving women as much as men have been an important part of the movement for more than 30 years, and when they became significant 20 years ago they were met by police violence, mass arrests, serious charges, and frequent imprisonment; imaginative events in those days included the march to Aldermaston in April 1958, the peace camp at Aldermaston from July to September 1958, the attempt to plough and plant Honington in October 1962, the attempt to auction and reclaim Marham in May 1963, and the nuclear disarmament symbol itself, with no distinction between 'male' and 'female' symbolism.

Without wishing to detract from the great success of the demonstrations on 12 and 13 December, I do wish to question the sexist and separatist assumptions and intentions represented by them and endorsed by you. It is easy to do without the traditional organisations and methods of the Left without excluding men, as the pacifist and anarchist movements have done for a century and as the Direct Action Committee and the Committee of 100 did from 1957 to 1968, and without adopting 'mystic anarchism' or any other kind of irrational dogmatism about 'male violence' on one side or 'female spirituality' on the other. We don't stand a chance at this crucial stage of the movement if we don't learn to work together, face facts, and grow up.

Capitalism's global crisis

W. P. Cockshott, Dept of Computer Science, University of Edinburgh

One of the disturbing things about the speech by Bahro (*NS* 17/24 Dec.) is the extent to which the constellation of views that he puts forward is already echoed within the British Labour Party. They are opinions that one frequently hears from members of the non-technical intelligentsia, a social stratum that is increasingly represented within the Party.

Such views are certainly anti-capitalist, but being anti-capitalist is not the same as being socialist. We have in Britain a long tradition of mandarin disdain for capitalist industry and commerce that goes back to the intellectual Tory opponents of industrialism of the last century. The ruling elites of our parliamentary parties and the state administration are made up of people with a liberal arts education; very few of them are engineers or scientists. Their intellectual formation, which imbues them with an element of almost class contempt for engineering, has not been conducive to the effective leadership of an advanced industrial society. It is a cultural tradition that in radical form could easily go 'Green', but that would not change its basically conservative character.

This conservatism is nowhere more clearly brought out than in its attitude to the Third World. Bahro gives as an objective 'holding up the basic process of capitalist advance, what Marx called the progressive function of capital' and to 'stop the export of capital to the Third World'. The Third World must languish in underdevelopment, because we who enjoy the benefits of industrialism know that that is what is best for them.

The Brazilians are lambasted for destroying the forests of the Amazon. In criticising this the ecologists attack not only the progressive role of capitalism, but even the progressive role of feudalism. Two thousand years ago continental Europe was cloaked in forests; without deforestation the building of European civilisation would have been impossible. Destruction of the natural environment is the first step towards the development of an agricultural environment.

The socialist and capitalist industrial societies are faced with a real challenge due to the increasing costs of natural resources, and the damaging effects of pollution. The more progressive societies such as Japan realise that rather than accepting deindustrialisation and a decline into poverty they must develop new forms of industrialism.

New sources of energy that are not polluting or resource-bound, such as fusion power or orbiting solar power stations, are needed to replace oil and coal. New industries that require fewer resource inputs, such as biotechnology and information technology, are needed to replace conventional heavy industry. These new industries require planned investment expenditure on an unprecedented scale, beyond the capacity of individual nation states, and quite beyond the capacity of competitive capitalism. They open up the possibility of a planned world economy and for the first time a material basis for international socialism. Anti-industrialism will not get us very far down this road.

Tribune

Jean Gibbons, Douglas Hill, George Hopkins, Phil Kelly, Jon Lansman, Sheila Marsh, Chris Mullin, Sheila Noble, Mary Walker, Nigel Williamson, Tribune, London WC1

In his letter attacking the present editor and staff of Tribune, Carl James (*NS* 31 Dec.) omits to declare an interest. He forgets to mention (a) that he was a defeated candidate for the editorship and (b) that he is one of those who has been advising John Silkin in the take-over bid for the paper. Indeed, the letter which you published was read out by Mr Silkin at a Tribune Group meeting in the House of Commons ten days *before* it appeared in the *New Statesman*.

We do not propose to engage in a point-by-point slanging match with Mr James through your columns, but wish to reiterate that *Tribune* is not the property of any sect, tendency or personality as any unbiased reader of the paper for the last six months will appreciate.

Under the present editor the columns of the paper remain open to critics of the present editorial policy, including, if they wish to contribute, Carl James and John Silkin.

An alternative strategy for Europe?

Leslie Caplan, London NW3

May I defend Vaclav Racek against the parochial assumptions of Rodney Hilton (Letters 31 Dec.)? It is a discomforting truth that there can be no global view of either the avoidance of nuclear war *or* human rights. Racek happens to be writing from a country that has been under foreign military occupation for 14 years, and that will continue so for the foreseeable future. 'Better red than dead' may be a useful tag in the West; it is a fact of life for all Czechs.

I well remember my shock, on a visit to that country a few years ago, to discover that my friends had all through supported American involvement in Vietnam. To them any action against Russia, however vicarious, could only be a move in the right direction. I came to realise that while the contrary view over Vietnam was valid in London and indeed in New York, it could be an impertinence sitting in Prague.

No doubt Czechs, too, are able to perceive that any attempt on their part to seize their own human rights as a free and sovereign nation, could only be destabilising for all Europe and very possibly lead to nuclear war. What they are putting up with is part of the price for us being free to seek accommodations with their oppressors.

Perhaps Racek means to imply that something more is expected of us in return than simply a write-off of their totally legitimate perspective – necessarily different from our own – on what the peace movement is all about. All human rights are valid, but some contexts make them more relative than others.

Support for Sinn Fein

Mike Gapes, Prospective Labour Parliamentary Candidate for Ilford North, London SW18

Steve Bundred claims that in the recent Northern Ireland Assembly elections Sinn Fein won '35 per cent of the anti-Unionist first preference votes' (*NS* 17/24 Dec.). This is only true if votes won by the Workers Party, which fought the election on class politics and a non-sectarian platform, are excluded. If the Workers Party vote is included then Sinn Fein won 32 per cent of 'anti-Unionist' first preference votes.

Presumably Steve Bundred regards this as unimportant since he seems to be only interested in counting the votes of Catholic Nationalist parties – Sinn Fein and SDLP – and ignoring the efforts of these small, brave, non-sectarian socialist voices in Northern Ireland. Is this because his policies are Catholic Nationalist?

Poor and getting poorer

Ruth Lister, Director, Child Poverty Action Group

In knocking the myth that low pay has nothing to do with poverty, Professor Atkinson (*NS* 3 Dec.) also appears to be dismissing the present system of family benefits as relevant to the solution.

Certainly, as he argues, the means-tested family income supplement with its pathetically low take-up rate, is no solution to anything. But what about child benefit, which is claimed by virtually everyone eligible for it? Wages cannot take account of how needs differ according to family size. An attack on low pay must be combined with substantial increases in child benefit in any effective anti-poverty strategy. This, in turn, should make it easier politically to tackle the poverty of those not in work.

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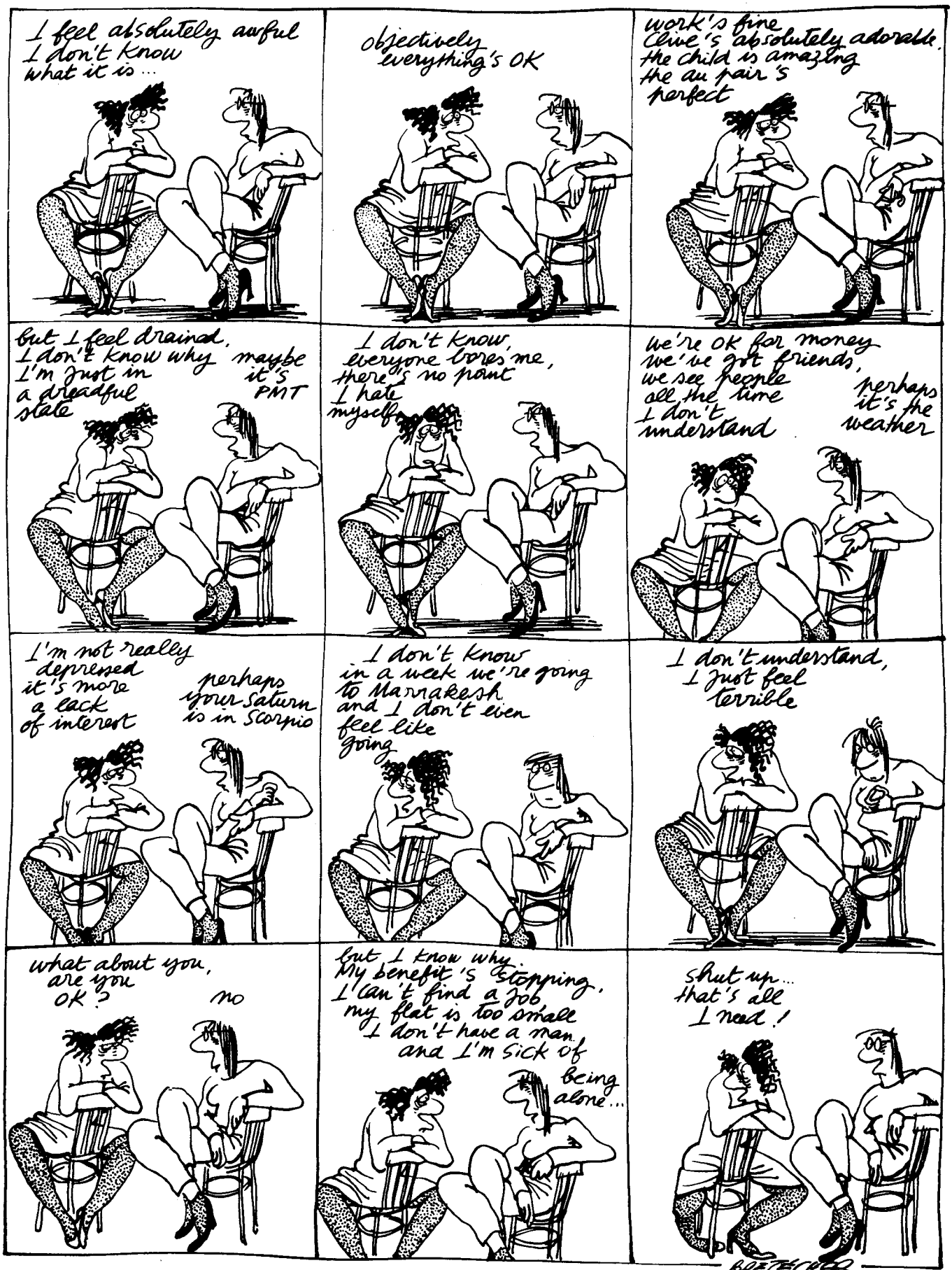
BRETECHER

lady luck


I feel absolutely awful I don't know what it is ...
objectively everything's OK
work's fine Clive's absolutely adorable the child is amazing the au pair's perfect
but I feel drained. I don't know why I'm just in a dreadful state
maybe it's PMT
I don't know, everyone bores me, there's no point I hate myself
we're OK for money we've got friends, we see people all the time I don't understand
perhaps it's the weather
I'm not really depressed it's more a lack of interest
perhaps your Saturn is in Scorpio
I don't know in a week we're going to Marrakesh and I don't even feel like going
I don't understand, I just feel terrible
what about you, are you OK?
no
but I know why. My benefit's stopping, I can't find a job, my flat is too small I don't have a man and I'm sick of being alone...
shut up... that's all I need!
BRETECHER

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Oswyn Murray

Reasons for decline

The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World
G.E.M. DE SAINTE CROIX *Duckworth* £38 & £15

This is a major work in every sense: it is conceived on the largest scale, with over 700 pages of densely written historical prose; it covers a millennium and a half of the history of the Mediterranean basin; and its theme is of fundamental importance for world history; it is the fruit of a lifetime's meditation on the historical process. The book, in fact, offers far more than its title suggests; it is concerned not just with Greece but with the whole history of the classical world from its origins to the Islamic conquest: almost half of the book is devoted to 'considerations on the causes of the grandeur of the Romans and their decadence', to use Montesquieu's phrase.

De Sainte Croix seeks to establish two points. He wishes first to determine the correct interpretation in Marxist thought of the phenomenon of class struggle and its meaning when applied to ancient society; in the second part he attempts to demonstrate that the Marxist conception offers the only satisfactory explanation for the main developments in ancient society from 700 BC to 700 AD. I believe that he is more successful in his first task than in his second, but even there he has demonstrated how illuminating a Marxist interpretation can be both in general and in particular. Indeed, he has shown once again, but for the first time within the English Marxist tradition, the importance of macro-history for setting a world in focus, and the power of the *longue durée* seen from a simple and consistent angle in enabling us to understand the past and its relevance today. The professionals will seek to break his work down into its component parts and criticise it in detail: they will be fully justified in doing so, but they will miss the main point of the book in trying to understand it as just another history book. It is rather a Marxist meditation on history illuminated by the close study of one major historical civilisation.

The first half of the book revolves around a discussion of what Marx meant by the term 'class struggle'. De Sainte Croix demonstrates that, despite certain ambiguous passages, Marx's central conception was that political struggle and armed conflict, class *war*, was only an epiphenomenon: the basic factor which is to be explained and which is in turn to explain history is the exploitation by one economically defined class of another class for the purpose of appropriating its surplus labour. This is self-evidently the most fruitful way of applying Marxism to ancient and modern societies, even if it suggests that we should perhaps abandon the phrase 'class struggle' in favour of 'exploitation'. Armed with this definition de Sainte Croix can then proceed to determine the forms of exploitation practised in the ancient world and their consequences. He first defines the characteristics of the classes exploited, rejecting the Weberian analysis in terms of status in favour of a purely economic analysis, into which however (with some unease) he is prepared to insert the class of women, who for him can be defined in terms of their economic rather than their biological role. Since in his view (and it is a view widely shared by non-Marxists such as M. I. Finley, though in my opinion much exaggerated) land was the principal source of wealth, his chief concern is with the exploitation of agricultural labour, primarily through labour as property, in slavery and other quasi-servile modes of production; these he holds to have largely prevented the exploitation of man through wage labour. This view of the relationship between slavery and wage labour can be attacked, but can also be defended as a generalisation based on the essential difference between ancient and modern exploitative economies.

Perhaps the most interesting and original part of this analysis is the discussion of the small independent producer in his relation to forms of exploitation. The success of the smallholder in achieving independence became the chief catalyst in the creation of Greek democracy, his difficulties in remaining independent the chief cause of its decline; his later exploitation by the organs of the state, first the increasingly bourgeois Greek city and then the Roman imperial taxation system, combined with the direct exploitation of the wealthy to force the peasant's gradual disappearance into serfdom. This is for de Sainte Croix the basic cause of the decline and fall, not indeed of the Roman Empire alone, but of ancient civilisation as a whole.

THERE is a simplicity and a power about this conception of the consequences of the class struggle embodied in the ancient economy which make the second half of the book almost an anti-climax; yet it remains a substantial achievement, both in its demonstration of the complexity of the actual process and in its working out of the historical dynamics of the theory. Of course it ignores many factors or reduces them, not always fairly, to the false homogeneity implied by a relentlessly economic interpretation of history: here the discussions of Roman imperialism and of the consequences of Christianity are particularly open to question. But, even when the general theory

Agricultural workers beating the olive trees: detail from 4th-century BC vase

Ronald Sheridan

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seems not to do justice to the diversity of history, de Sainte Croix's fascination with the waywardness of evidence carries the reader along in half-unwilling suspension of disbelief.

This is a fundamental work of Marxist interpretation marred for me only by its style. In an effort to free himself from the opposed jargons of sociology and of history, de Sainte Croix has evolved a style of excessive repetitiveness and colloquial verbosity. It is true that the book could have been half the length; and I do not refer to the many and fascinating digressions which every reader will forgive, but solely to the literary style of a man who can regard the Elder Pliny as 'in many ways one of the most attractive of all Latin writers'. In a review which he has not forgotten of de Sainte Croix's earlier book, I said it was like being in the ring with Muhammad Ali. I can only observe that if both pugilists have got a little slower in the ring, still the mouth remains. It is a sign of the power of de Sainte Croix's thought that it can struggle through the medium of his prose, until one even becomes affectionate towards the voice. On closing this book I felt the relief of the wedding guest as the Ancient Mariner finally ground to a halt:

> He went like one that hath been stunn'd
> And is of sense forlorn:
> A sadder and a wiser man
> He rose the morrow morn. □

LITERATURE
Paul Binding

The outsider

Franz Kafka's Loneliness
MARTHE ROBERT *Faber* £12.50

A better title for this brilliantly argued study might have been *Franz Kafka's Jewishness*. For this is Marthe Robert's concern: how his feelings of guilt, longing and alienation, consequent on his realisation of what it meant to be a middle-class Jew in Prague, determined both the form and the content of Kafka's mesmeric yet arcane art.

At a time when most of their fellow-citizens were discovering, or recovering, an awareness of themselves as Czechs, those in Kafka's circle were clinging, linguistically and culturally, to a German-hood which they had comparatively recently acquired. On the other hand, they were too proud to relinquish official affiliation to Judaism, but lacked any vital relationship with their inherited faith. In 1911 Kafka embarked on a friendship with Isak Löwy, the director of a popular Yiddish theatre; this impelled him towards an intense and years-long absorption in the vigorous culture of Eastern Jewry.

Far from diminishing his sense of isolation, however, appreciation of the organic nature of the Eastern Jewish tradition strengthened his sense of having lived – among Western Jews – a life of compound *ersatz* identities. Marthe Robert is surely right to see the following entry in his diary as a Rubicon in Kafka's inner development:

> Yesterday it occurred to me that I have not always loved my mother as she deserved [and Kafka hated his *father* with an often curiously unambiguous intensity] and this is because the German language prevented me. A Jewish mother is not a *Mutter* . . . *Mutter* is peculiarly German for the Jews, it unconsciously contains Christian coldness along with the Christian splendour; the Jewish woman who is called *Mutter* thus becomes not only ridiculous but strange as well.

In addition to the emotional difficulties of his relationship to Old Jewry, there were intellectual problems. 'A Socialist, a Darwinist and an atheist', Kafka was not really capable of even partial surrender to the orthodoxy he at times so desired. Marthe Robert is clear and persuasive about Kafka's fluctuating attitudes towards Zionism, so dreadfully bound up with his relationships to Jewish girls. Once such a relationship was named, Kafka retreated from the commitment to marriage and was unable to sustain sexual relations. So, whichever way he turned in his attempts to come to terms with being a Prague Jew, he found reasons for calling himself guilty, inadequate and impotent, and continued to convert the reasons into lived reality. As do his most representative heroes.

Marthe Robert is fascinating about the manifestations of Kafka's malaise in his outer life. In the matter of eating, for example. Kafka adopted a masochistic and isolating form of vegetarianism that she sees as an idiosyncratic perversion of the old Jewish dietary laws. Likewise Kafka's neurotic vision of coitus as an imposed, obligatory punishment for love is a distortion of codified orthodoxy's attitude to sex in marriage.

I HAVE only two reservations, neither of which should be taken as suggesting any diminution of my gratitude to this book. First, Kafka's best work surely succeeds through his apprehension of the *ordinary*, and to this the study pays less than due tribute.

Second, the peculiar lack of love by Kafka for any of his creations may be made comprehensible but should it, therefore, become altogether acceptable? Kafka has often been compared – by himself, by Marthe Robert, by others – to Dostoyevsky. But it is precisely his passionate relation to his characters that makes Dostoyevsky so extraordinarily universal an eye into the turmoil of our modern predicament. Kafka may have presaged the 20th-century dilemmas of the Third Reich and the Gulag the more exactly, but – unlike Dostoyevsky – in the last resort he shrank from the necessary involvement with even his most passive characters, the correlatives for himself. □

POLITICS
Frank Kane

Selling British

Iron Britannia: Why Parliament Waged Its Falklands War
ANTHONY BARNETT *Allison & Busby* £6.95 & £2.95

'A pimple on the ass' (Haig) or 'Britain at its best' (Thatcher)? Barnett's answer is that neither is an adequate description of the Falklands war. It was most certainly not another 'finest hour'. A parliament and people 'drugged by ethnicity' embarked on a costly military escapade for the sake of an illusory British way of life, against an opportunist junta which had always had a cosy relationship with the MoD exports department. Howled on by the yellow press, Thatcher affected a fine blend of quasi-Churchillian determination and Lady Macbeth-like hubris, all for the sake of 1,800 people whose way of life belies their supposed 'Britishness'. Pastoral, parochial and semi-feudal, they have more in common with the Elizabethan peasantry than with the average contemporary Briton.

But the war should not therefore be dismissed in the earthy metaphor of Alexander Haig, and this is Barnett's central point. He is concerned with identifying the political culture which predisposed the British public to war, and which was acutely expressed in the parliamentary sabre-rattling of 3 April. His lucid polemic traces this mentality back to 1940 ('Churchillism'), and suggests that Britain may eventually pay the price in megadeaths for Thatcher's warmongering. After all, if nationalist chauvinism can be so easily stirred by the Argentinians, what would be the Iron Lady's reaction to a Russian threat? The book's message is that the causes and the consequences of the Falklands war are extremely serious. A couple of Barnett's points deserve extrapolation.

'Fascism' is a word lightly spoken by the Left, but in truth Britain displayed many of the symptoms of incipient fascism in spring '82. The task force was sent, not to defend democratic freedoms, or to teach dictators a lesson, but to celebrate 'Britishness' and to add to the Leader's kudos. Society was mobilised and opinion was militarised, and the Leader expressed the wish, in the Cheltenham address, that these 'virtues' would motivate the British people in future. Traitors and scapegoats were found, ludicrously, in the FO and the media. Britain fought for a nationalist ideology, and not for any permanent interests.

Barnett's logic is perversely inescapable; Britain's real long-term interest would have been best served by the military defeat of the task-force. Thatcher's government would have collapsed, and Thatcherite Toryism

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would have been discredited, perhaps for ever. The defeat would have meant an enforced reassessment of Britain's 'great power' status, and perhaps the critical break-through for the peace movement. Strange as it may seem, we may have been condemned by the inefficiency of a few Argentinian bomb-aimers. □

CHINA
Jonathan Mirsky

The uses of Mao buttons

The Messiah and the Mandarins: The Paradox of Mao's China
DENNIS BLOODWORTH *Weidenfeld* £9.95

Mao Zedong's surviving senior colleagues judged him very harshly in their 1981 Party Resolution, but perhaps the most damning and poignant indictment of the Great Helmsman after his death in 1976 came from the prostitutes of Canton. As they plied their trade in the city's Park of Culture, they let their potential clients know who they were by wearing Mao buttons. Since no respectable person would do such a thing it was easy to spot the park-crawlers.

The prostitutes' gesture symbolised the damage millions of young Chinese suffered during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Although the Cultural Revolution was once highly admired in the West, especially for its particular effects in schools, we now know that education was one of its catastrophes. Among Mao's preferred styles, he told his greatest biographer, Edgar Snow, was Great Teacher; the young prostitutes were badly-educated products of the Cultural Revolution schools run on Maoist principles, which according to the subsequent official pronouncements on Cantonese prostitution didn't teach these young women much. As Dennis Bloodworth observes, they were 'indicating their availability in an appropriate manner by sporting the red and gold button of the man they might have said put them there – Mao Zedong'.

The prostitutes' defiant and sardonic two-fingers to Maoism several years before the Party could gather its courage to do the same thing in print, is a grace-note to China's painful de-Maoisation, and it is typical of Dennis Bloodworth that he tells us about it. For 25 years, until 1981, Bloodworth was the chief Asia correspondent of the *Observer*, and he saved his notebooks and best cuttings. In this sometimes very witty book, which he unconvincingly insists is not a biography of Mao, he makes the kind of pronouncements on Chinese national character most writers wisely avoid. They are telling and sensitive here, though, illuminating Mao's contributions, his errors and his crimes.

Because of Mao, Chinese now live twice as long as they did 40 years ago. But his mistakes cost China at least two decades of development, and his crimes caused millions to die years before their time, either violently or of starvation. There was a great watershed in Mao's life which Bloodworth identifies for us. Standing before jubilant millions on the day of the Communist victory, 1 October 1949, Mao said, 'The Chinese people have stood up.' Bloodworth shrewdly observes, 'It naturally did not occur to him that probably the best thing for the Chinese people would be if at that moment he himself stood down.'

Even now, more than six years after Mao's death and the avalanche of revelations about his career, Bloodworth's analysis will be intolerable for some. For years, he reminds us, Friends of China misled themselves and millions of others. Han Suyin and Shirley Maclaine are notorious. Sir Herbert Read, who flashed through China in 1959, wrote of the People's Communes, which within a year would contribute to a doubled death rate, 'it does not matter what the system is called . . . What counts more than statistics is the happiness and contentment of the peasants'. Plenty of peasants have since had their say about the communes, and they have just been written out of the new constitution.

Some Friends, like Felix Greene, who remained devout after Mao's death, were badly caught out sucking up to the chairman's successor, the now disgraced Hua Guofeng. For them, to expose Mao and the Maoists is tantamount to praising 19th-century imperialism, and brands the critic as an enemy of progress.

Of course, Bloodworth observes, too, that not only foreigners inserted the ring in their own noses. It would be vulgar to say so in China today, but Deng Xiaoping hailed the communes as they came into being, and Liu Shaoqi, now praised as a martyr of Mao's wrath, helped initiate the Great Leap, nowadays characterised in China as another of Mao's 'tragic errors'.

Bloodworth was not taken in. In 1958, his dispatches remind us, he was already deeply suspicious, and in 1966 he wrote of the new Cultural Revolution, 'Like a middle-aged man afflicted with mumps, the 17-year-old People's Republic of China is in the grip of an infantile revolutionary fever that normally hits nations when they are less than 12 years old.'

BLOODWORTH'S book is unusual and stimulating, but part of its stimulation arises from a serious flaw. His book, he says, is 'a study in irony . . matching the magnitude of Mao's achievement against the enormity of his errors'. But by stripping the Maoist epoch down to the chairman on one side, and his cheering section and enemies on the other, Bloodworth's structure becomes deceptively understandable. Indeed, he almost falls into the trap of which he accuses the Chinese: turning Mao into a myth. What we have in Bloodworth's Mao is little more than a product of the Chinese tradition, who adroitly used its deadliest weapons nearly to destroy the revolution he created. There is much more to China's last three chaotic decades, as Bloodworth's wonderful dispatches showed throughout the period, than an egomaniacal Helmsman propped up on the bridge by his self-serving officers, while down below millions of suffering passengers applauded. □

Philip Gross

A plague of jellyfish

One morning the sea blossomed with them, pale fleurs-du-mal
the Gulf Stream shunted into our too-perfect bay.
They curdled in the waves
and blotched the sand. We mourned the spoiled day
by bickering, then sulked, stared from the harbour wall . . .

Slow-flouncing, rippling, with movements hardly more
than a tremor of light, they massed: small fantasies
in see-through lace,
mauve-veined, tricked out with poison-hair; the sea's
ambiguous figments, flotsam hushed towards the shore,

threats, promises . . . You reached out, drew us tight
together, as that helpless unrelenting stare
surrounded us, those delicate
irises flexing and focusing as if brought to bear
on unfamiliar distances, our shifts of dark and light.

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Offensive Literature: Decensorship in Britain, 1960-1982

JOHN SUTHERLAND *Junction Books* £12.50 & £5.95

The Obscene Publications Act, 1959 – as tested in the *Lady Chatterley* and *Last Exit to Brooklyn* trials – and the Theatres Act, 1968, have influenced modern British writing quite as much as any literary movement. John Sutherland records the main stages in Britain's 'decensorship': the prosecutions, Reports, controversies that were battles in an intermittent war of strategy and counter-strategy.

By the late Sixties, the anti-censorship lobby had ensured that no prosecution would ever be brought against a book with literary pretensions. Accordingly, its opponents turned to 'political' targets – magazines like *IT*, *OZ*, and *Gay News*, which advocated alternative lifestyles – and found substitutes for the increasingly impotent 1959 Act in statutes relating to vagrancy, the postal service and blasphemy. Most recently, Mary Whitehouse attempted to circumvent the Theatres Act by invoking the Sexual Offences Act against *The Romans in Britain*. There has been, of course, cant on both sides: certain 'strong' books, long tolerated as pricey erotica for the few, were declared obscene when they assumed the form of cheap paperbacks for the many, while libertarians found that upholding the writer's freedom could mean having to discern literary merit where none existed, as during the *Inside Linda Lovelace* trial.

Sutherland's book is admirable as far as it goes. One would have liked to see, though, a more systematic examination of institutional censorship – by libraries, booksellers, printers, television authorities – and, in particular, of the issues raised briefly in the final chapter, '1982: The Censorship of Enlightenment – Feminism and Pornography'. 'Enlightened censorship' is no new phenomenon nor simply a question of pornography but also of racist and sexist material. If we are unwilling to bear such ills as the dark obverse of our freedoms, where is the line to be drawn? At what point might an abhorrence for censorship be outweighed by an abhorrence for the censored? Sutherland makes no suggestions.

David Montrose

What is Psychotherapy?

SIDNEY BLOCH *Oxford* £9.95 & £3.95

Well might we ask, with over 100 schools to choose from, each with its own theory and methods to pit against the rest, and nothing to stop anyone who chooses from simply putting up a plate and joining in. So this admirably clear and demythologising introduction to the major approaches and, more important, just what we can expect from them, is more than welcome.

It's now 30 years since Eysenck notoriously concluded from his review of the research that psychotherapy did no more good to people defined as neurotic than leaving them alone to cope as best they might. Research has improved since then, and now the reviews show that on the whole psychotherapy – excepting encounter groups, which seem to benefit only a third of those who go through them and actually harm a tenth – helps rather than hinders those who turn to it. But what the research also and more startlingly shows is that no one approach is more effective than any other, and that the training and even experience of the therapist may be irrelevant.

What do we make of that? That research – especially in the light of Bloch's own discussion of its technical difficulties – needs to look to its methodology? He draws a different set of conclusions. The first is that the most important notion to have emerged in the past 25 years is the one that says therapeutic effectiveness is determined by non-specific factors – like the establishment of an intense, emotionally charged and confiding relationship, hope on the part of the customer and the chance to experience success during the treatment – rather than any theory or method. The next is that practitioners from rival schools should stop their defensive bickering and become more open both to each other and to what they can learn about the very concepts of 'therapist' and 'patient' from the growing self-help movement, for which he predicts a spectacular future.

The eclectic approaches he wants to see are certainly gaining some ground – most interestingly in the way that the cognitive theorists are bringing behavioural approaches closer to the psychodynamic tradition in their recognition of the importance of working with thoughts and feelings rather than simply behaviours. But whether the followers of, say, Freud and Jung will, or indeed should, reconcile their quite fundamentally different views of humanity in the interests of the 'unified science of psychotherapy' to which he optimistically looks forward, is another question. Are the complexities of human nature really to be so neatly contained? He's surely right, though, to want to bring the consumer more actively into the therapeutic equation – and in this book he offers us a starting point for the dialogue.

Ann Shearer

Tyro

JOHN MILNE *Hamish Hamilton* £7.95

This fairly conventional novel is about a raw young man, an orphan and a virgin, who falls for an older woman, runs away to London, meets a set of bogus, wicked people and is thoroughly disillusioned and confused. The unusual thing about it is that the hero, Joe Jackman, is a private soldier, serving in Northern Ireland.

John Milne's portrait of modern army life is wholly convincing: the satisfaction of training and esprit de corps (the first Joe has known); the tedium and fear of service in the province (watching a street for hours on end to make sure 'no one nicks it or something') with only a rabid National Front corporal for company; the sudden burst of bullets from a sniper, or the rocket attack; running about in a lot of cumbersome equipment, kicking in a door to find a pregnant woman cowering beneath a table. It is written colloquially, directly and humorously, and has a freshness rare even in a first novel: a promising debut.

Lewis Jones

Green Thoughts: A Writer in the Garden

ELEANOR PEREYNI *Allen Lane* £9.95

Eleanor Pereyni's A-Z excursion through 'Autumn', 'Dahlias', 'Failures', 'Toads', 'Tree-Houses' etc successfully integrates gardening, autobiography, literary digression and irreverent gossip because of its underlying seriousness. Like many good essayists, Pereyni can exploit a subject for her own purposes. 'Compost', for instance, gives not only knowledgeable advice but also a glance at Mayan history and an affectionate portrait of J. I. Rodale, zany pioneer of organic farming and scourge of chemical-fertiliser companies. She also establishes, unobtrusively, an analogy between gardening and writing. 'Paths' stirs thoughts about challenges, to reader or writer, of getting from the beginning to the end of a composition. The author herself insists, 'I have never acquired the habit of cogitating in the open air. My only path is utilitarian. It leads to the garden shed . . .'

Pereyni's struggles in the Thirties to bring some colour to the mournful landscape garden of her husband's castle in Hungary were interrupted by the war and a hasty move to Connecticut. 'Because I am one of those unfortunates who when they lose something they love can't immediately replace it with a new model . . . I didn't want, ever again, to be attached to a piece of ground.' Things didn't work out like that and 30 years later she has written this least parochial of garden books. 'A garden is a completely private world or it is nothing', but gardening itself is universal: 'Dahlias' exposes Anglo-Saxon prejudices about New World horticulture; 'Woman's Place' documents sexism in the garden; 'Pruning' investigates the idea that garden design is a metaphor for larger issues.

Green Thoughts is the work of a writer who gardens rather than a gardener who writes and should please anyone who enjoys gardening, or reading, or writing.

Alan Hurst

Our Common History: The Transformation of Europe

Ed. PAUL THOMPSON *Pluto Press* £16.50 & £7.50

This is a stimulating and frustrating book, which raises important methodological questions about the use of autobiographical recollection as a supplement, corrective or alternative to more conventional historical sources. Its material, gathered and organised (and, of course – here is one major problem of method – selectively drawn upon) by practitioners of the relatively new discipline of oral history, covers some formative experiences of Europe's recent past. It includes accounts of the role of Dutch and Italian women in the anti-fascist Resistance; memories of early Scandinavian industrialism; reflections on the changing Breton peasant economy; and, from Germany, poignantly contrasted pieces, one charting the rich cultural and architectural traditions of a village in Hessen between the wars, another bringing together the memories of Bavarians who lived near the Hersbruck concentration camp where 5,000 prisoners died

This is fascinating material, but many readers will be left with a sense of frustration. With 21 pieces (contributions to the First International Oral History Conference) crammed into a bare 300 pages, book and individual essays alike become indigestibly dense. A dozen contributors should perhaps have been invited to expand their original papers, allowing both empirical material and historiographical questions to be presented at the length they deserve.

M. H. Ryle

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SCIENCE
Steven Rose

The fashion in theories

Pluto's Republic
PETER MEDAWAR *Oxford* £12.50

Peter Medawar is the arts graduate's vision of a living bridge between the two cultures. A distinguished scientist, Nobeled for his immunological research which lies behind a great deal of today's transplant technology, Director during the Sixties and early Seventies of the country's premier medical institute, he has thought and written on a wide range of issues centring round the theme of science, culture and philosophy. In addition, he and Jean Medawar have found time to produce a splendid introduction to modern biology in the *The Life Science*.

Medawar is an aristocratic, spare, elegant and somewhat saturnine figure and his prose matches his appearance. As a book reviewer over many years (in the *New Statesman* and elsewhere) he has shown his biological dexterity in dissecting out, with the minimum of blood and the maximum of effectiveness the pretensions of adversaries who have dared to step outside the canons of Anglo-Saxon pragmatism and the hypothetico-deductive mode in writing about science. His magisterial dismissals of the claims for purposive evolution by Teilhard de Chardin (*The Phenomenon of Man*) and for the irrational in the process of scientific discovery by Arthur Koestler (*The Sleepwalkers*) are not easily forgotten – Koestler was even stung into replying; surely the clearest mark of a reviewer's success! And his authoritative dismissals of IQ theory and its related psychometric follies have made him a formidable ally in a common cause.

Pluto's Republic is a collection of Medawar's best known writing and reviews in this area of the past two decades, including such well-known lecture expansions as 'The Art of the Soluble' and 'Induction and Intuition in Scientific Thought', and its publication provides not merely an opportunity to enjoy once more a delicately barbed wit, but to assess what more lasting contribution Medawar's thoughts on scientific method, as opposed to immunology, may offer. A clue is given by the title: *Pluto's Republic*, Medawar tells us in a classically chauvinistic backhander, is derived from a neighbour's malapropism but refers to an intellectual underworld of pseudoscience, of IQ psychologists, psychotherapists who fail to recognise good old fashioned organic diseases, mystical theologians and assorted critics of the Panglossian world of contemporary science.

Medawar's essay in defence of his title is as good a vehicle for displaying the intellectual weapons of this knight defender of the intellectual terrain of pure science as anything that follows it in the book, for what is abundantly clear throughout this collection is that, while in his immunological research Medawar has moved on in the years since his 1960 Nobel, he has not found it necessary to shift his broader philosophical framework a millimetre.

Science may have transformed its institutional relationship with the State, been subject to radical critique as an agent of social oppression and had its methodological underpinnings hacked away in the aftermath of Kuhn, Feyerabend and the sociology of knowledge; Sir Peter is oblivious to it all, standing guard with his drawn sword on that fronter between science and non-science which his discovery of Karl Popper seems to have revealed to him once and for all in some formative philosophical experience of the 1950s.

Scientists, on the whole, do not read philosophy; they do what they do and claim for their activities, post hoc, a validation based on some dimly remembered first-year undergraduate lectures by their professor. So, for decades, they believed they were researching in the Baconian, inductive mode, following Newton in feigning no hypotheses or Jeans and Eddington in measuring pointer-readings on a scale. Popper's revelation that they were all the time making hypotheses and testing them would have gone unnoticed by scientific journeymen in the empiricist tradition were it not for the fact that two chaps they trust, scientific Knights and Nobelists, Medawar and the neurophysiologist Jack Eccles, have been telling them for the past 20 years that they have really been Popperian all along. Medawar and Eccles as Knights of good Sir Karl's round table, have by now enfiefed much terrain for him.

Again and again in the essays of this collection Medawar is to be found attacking inductive methodology, defending a world view of science as conjectures – and refutations, and even following his mentor beyond 'exosomatic evolution' into his most recent retreat, an obscure limbo called 'world 3' in which human intellectual artefacts pursue quasi-autonomous evolutionary paths. What elegantly-phrased scorn Medawar would have poured on such a mystic troilism had it derived from the pen of a Teilhard or a Koestler!

IT IS, I suspect, Medawar's espousal of the Popperian cause, in 'The Art of the Soluble' and many other influential essays and lectures, some but not all reprinted here, which has so impressed the thoughts of the Viennese logician on otherwise untroubled Anglo-Saxon scientists that the volumes of *New Scientist* and even *Nature* have recently been taken up with agonised speculation over whether Darwinian evolutionary theory can *really* be called scientific. Clearly, according to the early Popperian criteria of testability and refutability by experiment or prediction, Darwinism must fail the science test.

As a deeply Darwinian man himself Medawar must have found this pitting of his heroes against one another a trifle disturbing. I hope he was relieved when the great philosopher told the anxious world a year or so back that he had softened his criteria of science sufficiently to let Darwin in – though apparently not yet Marx or Freud. But such troubles do not ripple the surface of Medawarian prose: he is so blissfully *certain* that he is right; that Popper-certified science will, in due course, reveal all and save all.

Meantime, cultural lag theory predicts that, before long, a newly eminent scientist will pick up Kuhn (or even Feyerabend) declare himself (I expect I'm right about the sex) in favour of revolutionary, paradigmatic or even anti-methodological science and leave us poor practitioners of science to scurry after the new gospel. When that happens, Peter Medawar's reputation will stand or fall not by the elegance of his Popperian exegesis but by his immunology. But perhaps he would not want it otherwise. □

ANARCHISM
Nicolas Walter

Another voice

Nestor Makhno in the Russian Civil War
MICHAEL MALET *Macmillan/LSE* £25
The Anarchists of Casas Viejas
JEROME R. MINTZ *Chicago* £14

The traditional historiography of 20th-century revolutions resembles a two-party parliamentary system, with a ruling establishment of liberals on the right and a loyal opposition of Marxists on the left, disagreeing about the interpretations but agreeing about the issues. In this duopoly there has been little room for third parties, and the anarchists in particular have suffered from the historians of both sides rather as they have suffered from the authorities of both sides. But the revival of anarchist activity in the 1960s was paralleled by a revival of interest in anarchist history, and this development has been especially significant in the cases of the Russian and Spanish revolutions, as may be seen in two recent books.

The difficulties with Russia are that the revolution happened more than 60 years ago and that the victors still control the country and much of the material. Nestor Makhno was the leader of the Ukrainian 'Insurgents', a mainly peasant and broadly anarchist movement which emerged in 1917, opposed not only the Germans and the Whites, but also the Nationalists and the Bolsheviks, and was destroyed by the latter in 1921. The history of this movement depends almost entirely on Bolshevik attacks and anarchist replies, and the barest facts are often obscure.

Michael Malet's book, based on a doctoral thesis, is the first proper account in English which discusses the movement on its own terms rather than as an aspect of broader national or political or military

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events. The narrative is sparse and the discussion is brief, but the essential story is now presented for non-specialist and non-sectarian readers, though Malet doesn't conceal his sympathies for the Makhnovists. He takes modern work into account, but rightly concentrates on the original material, much of which still isn't available in English. He speculates about the material which isn't yet accessible at all, and about the survivors whose evidence would be fascinating if it could ever be recorded, but there seems little hope of such a development.

THE DIFFICULTIES with Spain are less serious – the revolution happened more recently, the victors have lost control of the country and the material, and anyway Fascists seem less interested than Communists in rewriting the past. Casas Viejas is an Andalusian town which was the scene of a notable revolutionary insurrection and reactionary suppression in 1933, three years before the Civil War. Jerome Mintz's book, based on a study of the written material and on interviews with the survivors, may seem to be a narrow monograph on a single episode in a single place, but it turns out to have much wider interest and much deeper significance.

Mintz is an American anthropologist, and he has produced a remarkable combination of documentary and oral history, of chronological narrative and social anthropology, managing at the same time to tell the story of the anarchists and anarchosyndicalists in Spain in general and in Casas Viejas in particular and to bring the story to vivid life through the words of dozens of local witnesses. The result is one of the best books about the Spanish Revolution or the anarchist movement; it is also well written, well illustrated, well produced, and relatively cheap – a rare event these days. Mintz convincingly demolishes both liberal and Marxist myths about the Spanish anarchists, and compellingly depicts their real world in a classic of revolutionary historiography. The same sort of work has of course been done for subsequent revolutions – if only it could have been done for the Russian Revolution – but it has never been done better than this. □

Among this week's contributors:

OSWYN MURRAY is Tutor in Ancient History at Balliol College, Oxford.

JONATHAN MIRSKY is the *Observer*'s China specialist.

STEVEN ROSE is Professor of Biology at the Open University and co-author, with Richard Lewontin and Leo Kamin, of *Not in Our Genes,* to be published later this year by Penguin.

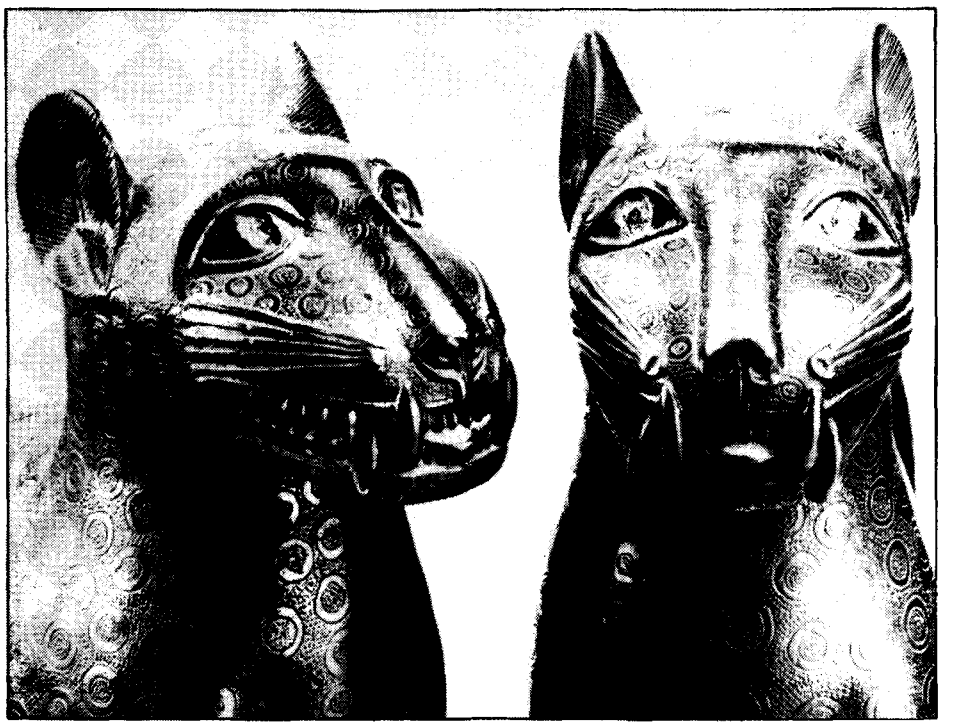
NICOLAS WALTER is the editor of the *New Humanist.*

M. H. RYLE is the author of *The Politics of Nuclear Disarmament* (Pluto); he works as an adult education tutor for Sussex University.

ANN SHEARER is the author of *Disability: Whose Handicap?* (Basil Blackwell).

ART
John Spurling

Strangely familiar



Bronze leopards from Benin, currently at the RA

Chris Baker
Warwick Arts Trust, 33 Warwick Square, London SW1, until 15 January

Treasures of Ancient Nigeria
RA, until 23 January

The City's Pictures
Barbican, until 23 January

'Visually speaking, then as now, I liked winter more than summer because winter seems to condense and focus things: the ambiguity or mystery in shadows and darkness is less easy to fix from any one source, everything seems more physical and closer together.' Chris Baker's first one-man show is a winter show in its matter as well as its timing. These are austere paintings and drawings, mainly black and white, with only the occasional tinge of yellow or pink, one surface of icy green – scored, as it were, with skates – and two or three expanses of pale, cold blue. But, as one looks longer, the first impression seems less and less exact, for the colours are more like atmospheres, invading the whites and altering the contrasts with a flash of iridescence here, a burst of orange there, an over-all glow of foggy lamplight yellow somewhere else.

The structures are as surprising as the colours. You begin by seeing them as flat forms – mainly hard-edged and geometrical – in a two-dimensional space, with strong variations of density and emphasis. Thick black shapes are echoed, reversed or developed by more tentative, sketchy lines, enclosing rather than excluding space. Then suddenly, as if you had touched a button, the whole picture seems to spring back into the third dimension. The black shapes become the dark edges of solid walls, the solid walls shift backward or forward in relation to each other, the coloured or shaded areas open into sky-like rents. What one took to be a rather delicate, lyrical experience in two dimensions transforms itself disconcertingly into a dramatic, vertiginous plunge into deep space, a sort of *Star Wars* effect.

Yet everything remains ambiguous. 'Whether a shadow is a silhouette or a solid substance is harder to gauge in winter', says Baker in his catalogue notes. Look again, perhaps from closer to, and the picture has snapped flat again, so that you are aware this time of the surface texture and its contrasts of opacity and transparency. The more tenuous forms are veiled or translated into glassy reflections, some of them half dissolving in little sputters of sooty smoke. The thick black shapes, meanwhile, abandon their temporary role as recessive shadows and resume their weight and prominence as things in themselves; a square, a triangle or a reptilian geometrical figure which might also be, in this world of quick changes and tricks of the imagination, a pattern of ascending steps or the spine of a building.

The architectural quality of Baker's paintings and their frugal use of colour suggest that there is a sculptor in him struggling to get out, but he denies this. A sculptor, he points out, has to put his work in an alien setting, whereas a painter controls his entire world. It is the object in its setting that

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interests him – so much in its setting, indeed, that the two are inseparable. He admires Rembrandt more than any other master:

> I was touched by what he did with ordinary things, the way in which he placed a man or a woman in an interior and did it in such a way that you felt that the person was entirely at home in that environment or had actually created it.

There are no men or women as such in Baker's pictures, but the vague outlines of two heads and shoulders appear on the surface of one and in another a small gang of black and white cigar-shaped forms, tilted on their beam-ends as if walking, have a comically portentous human air. But are they a gang or only a couple with their shadows? Men and women are not so much absent from the paintings as physically invisible. Their traces are everywhere, since in exploring the paintings with our eyes it is we who enter their mysterious interior and exterior dimensions in our minds and find them increasingly familiar. They don't, of course, look like what we know any more than one could have guessed what they looked like before entering the gallery; but coming out afterwards through the narrow entrance-hall and down the steps into a London street in winter, it is hard for a moment not to feel slightly cigar-shaped in a world of ambivalent appearances: hard and soft, transparent and opaque, coloured and colourless, shadowy and substantial.

BRONZES from Benin were well distributed over Europe after being looted in the British punitive expedition of 1897; they have, therefore, had much more publicity than the portrait heads from Ife which were mostly discovered by chance or excavated in the last 40 years or so. Yet it was from Ife, the much older kingdom whose art flourished between the 12th and 15th centuries, that the Benin sculptors learnt their technique, and they would surely have been the first to acknowledge the superior skill of the Ife artists. Powerful and impressive as the Benin bronzes are – especially those extraordinary wall-plaques based apparently on the illustrations the artists had seen in Portuguese books – they cannot match either the outward naturalism or the inward spirituality of Ife.

The Ife heads – made of brass, copper or terracotta – are modelled so as to suggest the soft contours of the individual face and the hard bone-structure beneath, but the expression and pose are idealised. The result is something between the flesh-and-blood reality of a Medici prince and the semi-divinity of a Donatello saint. One searches for comparisons, but there is really nothing like them, in or out of Africa, except the terracottas done in the neighbouring kingdom of Owo, which are smaller, sweeter, more domestic variations of Ife. Unless you are a regular visitor to Nigeria, which has lent these treasures as well as those of Benin, Igbo-Okwu and Nok (the 5th-century BC culture from which Ife must have derived), you should not let them out of the RA until you've seen them.

The pictures collected over the last three centuries by the Corporation of London were housed in the Guildhall Art Gallery between 1886 and 1941, when the gallery was destroyed in the Blitz. This exhibition at the Barbican is their first proper airing for 14 years and even so contains less than a tithe of the whole collection. It's the sort of miscellany you might expect – huge canvases commemorating public occasions, portraits of city worthies, marine paintings, topographical prints and drawings, riverscapes, landscapes, Victorian narrative paintings. Lely, Reynolds, Ramsay and Lawrence are among the portrait-painters; Constable (the full-size study for *Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows*), Turner, Sandby and Linnell among the landscapists; but the strongest consistent group in the collection is Victorian narrative: Maclise, Millais, Dyce, Holman Hunt, Tissot, Poynter, Alma-Tadema, Gilbert et al., the majority bequeathed by one benefactor in 1902. The show comes to life again briefly at the end with Matthew Smith, but then subsides damply with a few souvenirs of wartime. One doesn't get the impression, in spite of the quantity they possess, that the Corporation have ever set serious store by their pictures – rather that, like knick-knacks about the house, the tiresome if sometimes accidentally valuable things have accumulated willy-nilly about them. One would like to see the City Fathers take fresh thought for their position and become generous patrons of contemporary art – perhaps specialising in London-based artists. They could start with Chris Baker. □

THEATRE
Benedict Nightingale

Stuck at Dover

THINGS have certainly changed in the 30 years since Arthur Miller accused the British theatre of being 'hermetically sealed off from reality'. For instance, it is a little difficult to imagine *Salad Days* running 2,283 consecutive performances in the London of 1983. Did you see it on ITV over the holidays and, like me, boggle at its relentless cutification of young love and its serenely unselfaware class-prejudice? What stood out, above the frolicking debs and dancing policemen, the titled mothers beneath their hairdryers and the droll uncles in the Cabinet, was the show's treatment of its only authentic prole, a grinning boy abjectly devoted to the hero and heroine, whose magic piano he was supposed to guard. His name was Beppo or Troppo or somesuch, and he was, believe it or not, totally dumb and given to prancing around with a hat, into which passers-by dropped silver for his master and mistress. There, in that image, was the pre-1956 theatre's utopian view of the working class: the very friendliest, most loyal style of human chimpanzee.

The whirligig of time brings in its revenges; and, if you want to know how violent these can be, try and see Steven Berkoff's *Decadence*, which is about to reopen at the Arts. Its central image is an upper-crust goon gurgling, snorting and burping while he stuffs himself brimful of Savoy swill: the very coarsest, most self-indulgent style of human chimpanzee. The class war rages on, in the theatre as in society itself; but in the theatre, as not yet in society, the citadel has been substantially ceded to new owners. At any rate, the most powerful voices now belong to those accusing their rulers of properly belonging in the jungle, not those patronising the ruled for having scampered on four legs out of it.

Such plaints will continue to be heard, and I daresay get more intense. Indeed, I detect in several recent plays, prime among them *Decadence* itself, a new, fiercer note of exasperated disbelief that our social structures should prove so resistant to change. And I suppose such plaints *should* continue, until there actually *is* authentic change. Yet I find myself not altogether unaffected by a recent lecture-tour of India, where I saw ragged and hungry families sleeping on the street, was asked for alms by people who had chopped off their limbs or had them chopped off as children, and heard the fears of the fair city of Madras, whose millions may be entirely without water from February onwards. Somehow my boastful little speech about the British theatre's commitment to reality began to strike me as inappropriate or worse. Wasn't our drama, well, a bit insular and inward-looking, asked a polite gentleman from his front-row seat in Delhi; and I had to reply that, well, yes, perhaps it was.

Of course, this admission demanded (and got) prompt qualification. A nation's more politically and socially responsible dramatists must clearly give particular attention to that nation's social and political problems, and it could be argued that when unemployment is at 3,200,000 and rising they have a positive obligation to do so. Morever, some 'responsible' drama – Trevor Griffiths's *Occupations* or Edward Bond's *Summer* or John Spurling's *British Empire* or (to take a writer of less radical hue) Tom Stoppard's *Every Good Boy* and *Professional Foul* – does have more than national relevance and point. Yet one can't help noticing how often even those playwrights who venture afar manage in effect to stay at home. Stephen Lowe's *Tibetan Inroads* would be an example, Paul Kember's *Not Quite Jerusalem* a better one, because it is a much livelier, more interesting play. It takes us to an Israeli kibbutz, evokes it most entertainingly, and ends up by being squarely and angrily about nothing other than the British class-system. Rather similarly, Howard Brenton plunges us deep into the Celtic twilight, only to reiterate what most sensible people already think about our presence in Ireland. *The Romans in Britain* should properly have been called *The British in Ulster;* and a parallel rechristening could occur with very many plays.

It would be naive as well as presumptuous

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to enjoin our dramatists to become more 'international'. Besides, a play doesn't magically become intellectually and emotionally larger, still less better, because it's set in a Calcutta slum instead of a Hackney tower-block. It is possible to write as dully – well, *almost* as dully – about Peruvian Indians as about British football hooligans. Nevertheless, the first of my hopes for 1983 is that our politically more aware dramatists will just occasionally raise their eyes beyond our island fort, whether to look at past or present, at facts, issues or principles. That way, they might conceivably even influence our lives inside it. After all, our national fate does not depend on internal factors only. To take an obvious example, it is odd that, at a time when CND is resurgent, our theatre should almost completely ignore the nuclear arms race. When I was asked in India which dramatists took an interest in the subject, I found myself embarrassedly fumbling with the name of David Campton, who wrote his most significant work 20 years ago.

David Hare's *Map of the World*, due at the National later this month, may prove to be a start, at least as far as scope is concerned. But it would be another and graver naivety to enshrine scope as the supreme dramatic virtue. The late and still-lamented Ken Tynan used to say that even the post-1956 theatre was failing to deal fully enough with politics or trenchantly enough with sex; and his second complaint has been as incompletely answered in recent times as his first. To be sure, there are plenty of plays about middle-class marriage and the woes of menopausal man, and not all of them are irredeemably mediocre. Indeed, possibly the finest offerings of the past three years have been Pinter's *Betrayal*, Nichols's *Passion Play* and Stoppard's *Real Thing*, three sensitive and relatively searching studies of sexual treachery. Yet our playwrights usually seem as loath to venture down to heart, stomach, bowels as to set foot across the English Channel; and consequently our drama lacks depth as well as breadth, whether it's sex specifically or the psyche and relationships more generally. Emotionally, as politically, we get stuck at Dover.

Actually, the two most obviously impressive offerings of 1982, *The Real Thing* and *A Kind of Alaska*, can't be altogether acquitted of this charge. I admire Stoppard and positively revere Pinter; yet I felt that both could have done more to investigate or at least evoke the psychological murk introduced by their subject-matter. In some ways, Ayckbourn's *Way Upstream* and Steiner's and Hampton's *Portage of A. H.* were braver efforts, even though the first became melodramatic and the second was dramatically clumsy. Both tackled the subject of evil, and the second went further than any recent play in attempting to penetrate the heart of darkness, both personal and political. Indeed, the Steiner-Hampton Hitler-saga went further than any recent play in combining that depth and scope whose joint absence I found myself, by the end of my lecture-stint in India, publicly admitting and lamenting. My second wish for 1983 is that its example is not forgotten. □

FILMS
John Coleman

Third person

The Return of the Soldier (A)
Studio; Classics, Haymarket, Tottenham Court Road and Chelsea; Odeons, Kensington and Swiss Cottage
Night Shift (AA)
Warner; ABCs, Shaftesbury Avenue, Fulham and Edgware Roads; general release
Battle of Algiers (X)
Gate, Bloomsbury

Back in 1973 Alan Bridges picked up a shared first prize at Cannes with *The Hireling*, an exceedingly handsome period piece which shifted the L. P. Hartley novel from post-World War Two to the early Twenties, featured one wing of the fabled Getty mansion and had Sarah Miles as a young society widow mending after a nervous breakdown. Many of my colleagues applauded but it left me with arms folded. I sound this cautionary note because Mr Bridges has once again directed a tale set in the past, this time making loving use of the ancestral home of the Gage family, Firle Place in Sussex, and casting Alan Bates as a shell-shocked officer rescued from the trenches in 1916; and once again I am out in the cold, vaguely respectful but unmoved. Drawn by Hugh Whitemore from Rebecca West's short first novel, published in 1918, **The Return of the Soldier** holds the germ of a promising idea: what happens when a man loses 15 years of his past, has no memory of his wife but desperately yearns for the long-married innkeeper's daughter he loved as a young man?

Amnesiac Chris (Mr Bates) comes home to manicured Baldry Court, kept going by his cousin Jenny (a muted and near-mute Ann-Margret, adequate to the minimal demands made upon her), a vain and snobbish wife, Kitty (Julie Christie), and a murmuring houseful of servants. Bitterly resentful, pettishly persuaded he may be shamming, Kitty grandly allows him to resume some kind of relationship with his old flame, careworn Margaret (Glenda Jackson). Constantly gazing into a hand-glass Kitty believes 'her' Chris will be disabused at first sight of 'that dowd' in her awful black hat and yellow raincoat. Nothing of the sort, of course, and it takes the ambiguous intervention of a psychiatrist (Ian Holm), who suggests Chris may be happier left alone, and a magnificent gesture of renunciation by tormented Margaret, entailing the highly suspect gimmick of a child's doll, to drag the master of the manor into the present – and a probable return to the battlefield.

Miss West's fiction, to which Whitemore's screenplay fairly closely adheres, has a few authentically savage and pathetic lines, and these are properly made the most of, but it is very much one of her lesser works, with a lot of weather and scenery. Nevertheless, its prime device – that of casting Jenny, with her passionate, unspoken love for her cousin Chris, as quite shrewd narrator, well enough aware of Kitty's febrile shallowness – does allow certain important deepenings of the tale's moral texture, not the least of them being her growing sympathy, even respect for Margaret. Short of a vast amount of voice-over, this first-person, often adjudicating presence has to go. The nearest the film comes to the importance of Jenny is in a messily contrived opening dream sequence. (Elsewhere, a couple of flashbacks to Margaret 15 years earlier and a scene where feverish Chris sees a bedside friend's face as rotting, then his own putrid corpse on the bed, are respectively redundant and cheap horror-movie intrusions.)

If Jenny is thus reduced to a shadow, however decently Englished by Ann-Margret (whatever happened to that flame-haired floozie of yesteryear? it's amazing), the Bates part – Chris is the idealised shadow in the book – has had to be beefed up somewhat. Too much good-taste reticence prevails, though, too much is left to hints and glances. When the psychiatrist asks the assembled women, 'Would you say that he turned to sex with a peculiar need?', it is Margaret who coolly answers: 'Yes, he was always very dependent' – and one doesn't believe a word of it. The exchange is practically verbatim from the novel, but there one has the flickering activity of imagination, and notably Jenny's imagination, to lend it some likelihood and force. A serious pity that such a well-turned-out film should have so utterly failed to take into account what makes the book tick, where it ticks. Julie Christie manages the petulance all right, but the stars of the occasion are really Shirley Russell, who did the clothes, and Luciana Arrighi as production designer.

Ron Howard's **Night Shift** has Henry Winkler, of Fonz fame, as timid Chuck, a financial analyst turned attendant at the New York City Morgue. Bullied by a mom who goes to séances for the pleasure of shouting at his dead dad, burdened by a fat-conscious fiancée who can't achieve orgasm, barked at by a black mastiff every time he emerges from his apartment, wearily writing a cheque on the subway when his loose change proves insufficient for a big, begging saxophonist, he suffers an abrupt change of life-style when he befriends a beat-up whore, Belinda (Shelley Long), and his St Vitus's-dancing new assistant persuades him that the morgue at night is an ideal place from which to run a call-girl business. This jerky Billy is played by Michael Keaton with a measure of appeal and a dubious script by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel has intermittent verve, milking the old tart-with-heart-of-gold and turning-worm routines for more than they are currently worth. But a beta for trying.

Far and away the best film by Gillo Pontecorvo, his 1965 **Battle of Algiers**, is now at the Gate in a new print. Using actors, amateurs and real-life participants to trace events in the revolt in the Casbah from 1954 to 1960, it remains required viewing. □

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TELEVISION
William Boyd

Puce

I THOUGHT I had it well planned. Leave the country on 22 December and not return until just before New Year and thereby miss *all* Xmas TV. But I miscalculated. The 'music and laughter' goes on for an unconscionably long time. It was the quality of the music, though, that got to me first. One of the first shows I encountered on my return was something called **Raffaella Carra in Russia** (C4). Raffaella is a blond Italian chantoose. Numerous European and South American TV companies club together to set her down in some picturesque city. There, to a background of famous buildings (Red Square, Kremlin, etc), she mimes to indistinguishable jaunty Euro-pop songs – in Italian. I switched off during a number where Raffaella sang along with dozens of plump, puce-clad Russian girleens.

The show is valueless. Yet it would be classed as light entertainment and I daresay reflects the sort of programme that the anti-C4 camp would like to see replacing all the seditious, foul-mouthed minority access scheduling. It was far and away the worst thing I've seen on Channel 4.

It was matched, though, by another singer on ITV. In **They're Playing My Song** (LWT) we were swamped with cloying sentiment and deafened by the sound of mutual back-slapping as various stars testified to Marvin Hamlisch's qualities as a wonderful human being and composer of genius. The worst offender was Liza Minnelli who acts her sincerity with such brazen lack of self-conciousness that it's scarcely credible anyone could be taken in. Hamlisch was, though – or at least was prepared to act right back – in a nauseating duet where the two of them twittered and preened quite shamelessly. Arch and coy weren't in it.

By this time I was in no mood for **John Denver** (BBC-2) in his religio-folk phase (they all come out at Christmas) and paused only long enough to note that he's a kind of American Cliff Richard, ageless and with the corded neck of the extremely thin. As well as sharing the same musical niche, Denver also possesses Richard's wide-of-the-mark taste in clothes. More puce again, this time in the form of a shirt, offset by a white suit and tie.

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One turned, hopefully, to the comics for something more digestible. **'Allo 'Allo** (BBC-1) sounded bad, however, and it was, even though it came from the Croft/Lloyd script-writing team. *'Allo 'Allo* is a comic spoof of *The Secret Army* series. René runs a restaurant-cum-brothel where his chief patrons are the local German officers. Reluctantly he agrees to become part of the chain helping Allied airmen escape to freedom. The show has all the usual faults of British TV comedy (the crudest double entendres, football stadium lighting, helpless studio audience) and, alas, allows everyone to trot out their parodies of Inspector Clouseau. Zee erscaping ermen will 'ide 'ere, and so on.

Croft is one of the doyens of this sort of comedy – pulling off successes against the odds – but everything seems wrong here. The reason is that, unlike three previous hits (*Dad's Army, Ain't Half Hot* and *Hi-Di-Hi*), this show seems born of a notion (Hey, let's do a spoof of *Secret Army*!) rather than from any personal experience or collective memory. What the audience are relating to here is just another TV show, rather than any reality based on the Home Guard, army life or holiday camps. Another factor in the hollowness of *'Allo 'Allo* is that the central characters are foreign. All broad comedy feeds off stereotypes and Croft and his co-authors' work is no exception (the bank manager, the sergeant major, the Northern comic). The problem is that our stereotypes of foreigners are even more simple and two-dimensional than of our own nationals. There is no room for any subtlety of characterisation in *'Allo 'Allo* and it is precisely this aspect that has been responsible for successes in the past.

Undermining stereotypes is one of the main ploys used by the Comic Strip team. On the opening night of Channel 4 their *Five Go Mad in Dorset* was a clever and very enjoyable demolition of Enid Blyton's Famous Five. This week in a more acerbic and grimmer mood they had a go at War. In 1985 a couple flee the Warsaw Pact invasion of Surrey, hoping to find safety in the depths of the countryside. The adventures that subsequently befall them run the gamut of most war film genres, through *Patton, The Deer Hunter, The Dirty Dozen* and *The Wild Bunch*. Not every send-up came off, but there were many more hits than misses. The best sequence concerned a group of West Country yobboes pretending to be Mexican bandits – 'Moi name's not Donald, it's Miguel.' Stalwart support is provided by the two women in the team: Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders.

Just to prove how long the Xmas and New Year thrash lasts **Whatever You Want** held their New Year Party on 3 January. *WYW* was one of C4's notable successes, largely due to presenter Keith Allen's agreeably abrasive personality. They rather lost their way with the party, though, because of the considerable number of prats they'd invited along as merrymakers. Prizes to the two lunkheads from Duran Duran and to Malcolm MacLaren who somehow managed to equate Charles Dickens with the Sex Pistols. Humbug. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2752 **Set by C. Fever**

'In the room the women come and go,/Talking of Michelangelo.' Let's have that conversation. Up to 150 words, by 21 January.

No 2749 **Set by May Day**

Off-putting party political broadcasts.

Report **By PC 49**

New Year's Day at the nick was pretty quiet as usual (a spot of grief with a hot-dog seller on Clerkenwell Green, but nothing else), so I had plenty of time for perusing your jottings. Not that there were many to peruse: been overdoing it on the mulled wine again, I suppose. Mark Anderson's entry was brevity itself: 'Good evening, this is a party political broadcast on behalf of the Social Democratic Party.' Very droll. Two quid to him, eight to each of the others. Mind how you go.

Mrs Thatcher: Now, I wish to say something about the defence of our homeland. We are a proud nation. We have proved, yet again, that Britannia rules the waves. There are those who think that a handful of women who claim to be peace-loving – and I speak as a woman who also claims to be peace-loving – can save the world from nuclear war by chanting slogans. Not true. Nuclear weapons must be met with nuclear strength, not with weakness; with deeds, not words. You know as well as I do that it takes an armed man to deal with a bully. We intend to see that the Russian Bear is confronted, not with a paper tiger, but with the British Lion, fully rampant.

A happy and peaceful 1983 to you all.

ROGER MARGISON

Friends, what would government by the ecology party be like? Well, basically, it would be a politically holistic revolution transforming every aspect of your lives. On the train to work, those irritating interpersonal barriers between you and your fellow passengers would disappear thanks to the touch-and-feel sessions set up in each carriage. Our scheme for decentralising society's power structures would mean that, instead of lying slumped in front of the telly every evening, you could start actively participating in the political process by sitting on neighbourhood committees. Then there would be our roughage-encouragement campaign allied to a nationwide distribution of personal waste converters. With these, people would at last have the satisfaction of putting their own bodily wastes back into the soil, perhaps to return in next year's courgettes. Just imagine that!

EWAN SMITH

But, I hear you asking, what sort of world can we look forward to at the end of this long dark tunnel?

Not a world for the work-shy or the faint hearted, or anyone who expects to get a free ride by hanging on to the coat-tails of the successful.

The Conservative tomorrow will mean a society which cares enough to provide opportunity for all those of us willing to invest, to pay a fair price for

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the things we want: a home for those that want one, health care for those that choose to have it, education for those children that require it.

Meanwhile an expanded police force, bigger and better prisons and stiffer penalties will ensure that ordinary people will be safe to drive through the streets without fear of molestation from those who want something for nothing.

STEPHEN BURKE

Trust the people! You are not the selfish materialists old-style politicians think. You care. You worry about the needy, the old and the handicapped; you care about drought, famine and disease. Look at the cash you already give in an admittedly disorganised way, helping others at home and overseas. Goodwill is there, but not trust from the politicians . . . All that's needed is to activate the giving potential of Britain by modern techniques and organisation – to make it truly effective!

(Close-up whirring computer)

This Party means to do just that. A tenth of everyone's income will be diverted by taxation specifically to help the poor everywhere . . . efficiently! We are confident this policy will strike a willing chord in your heart. A vote for us is a vote for your neighbour. Trust the people!

(Close-up neighbours receiving)

Happiness is efficient giving . . .

T. GRIFFITHS

The Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw: What, you may ask, and indeed I believe you have every right to ask, what has gone wrong with Britain? Our prisons are full of . . . er, prisoners . . . Unemployment has been pushed up by . . . er, the fall in the job market, and so on. And, you may well ask, what is this government doing about it? I think that's a fair question, and I would simply say this. We have streamlined industry to the . . . er, bone. Inflation is . . . er, deflating. All the signs are that a complete recovery, er, may come . . . in time. In Mrs Thatcher we have a strong leader whose strength lies in her . . . er, her strength. I urge you to vote Conservative, above all, because it is, er . . . an extremely desirable thing. Goodnight to you.

PETER NORMAN

We are not a doctrinaire organisation. On the contrary, we claim to represent the best of all parties, without their narrow prejudices – the compassion of all true Conservatives, the structural efficiency of the Labour Party, the fire and passion of the Alliance, the intellectual rigour of the National Front. We are a party for everyone, and everyone will find something for him or her in our policy package – from annual £100 dog licences to ecological use of the motorways to instant war on the Soviet Union. This is a really fresh vision and we intend, in this day and age, when the chips are down, to leave no stone unturned in our effort to be where it's at. So give what you can. It's got to be worth a try, hasn't it? The world seems to be full of problems, and we'd all be much better off if we solved them. Oh – and don't forget to turn out at election time.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

NEW STATESMAN INDEX

The index to Vol. 103 (January-June 1982) is available, price £1.50, post free, from the publisher: 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

FIRST PERSON

Tim Beaumont

Land for the people

AT ONE MOMENT during his *Rural Rides*, William Cobbett came across a square little house standing in a beautiful garden and, at the entrance, a neat notice proclaiming: 'Paradise Place; Spring guns and steel traps are set here.' Nothing could better express the attitude of landowners over the greater part of the world, not least in Britain. The countryside is productive, beautiful and . . . mine!

What is wrong with British agriculture? First, there is the existence of an exploited labour force. Over the last 200 years British farming has had its ups and downs. During the downs, the farmers have had comparative hardship, but during the ups they have done very nicely, thank you. The present 'up' has now lasted for over 40 years. The agricultural labourer, on the other hand, has alternated between pauperdom and being the worst-paid skilled worker in the country. There is only one cure for this and that is that the people who work the land must share in its profits. This may or may not involve nationalisation; nationalisation seems to me a red herring. I once lived in a country where land was nationalised; it was a capitalist showpiece; its name was Hong Kong. What is more important than the nation owning the land is that the workers should benefit from it, either through smallholdings or cooperatives.

The second ill is the depopulation of the countryside, which comes mainly from the substitution of capital for labour in agriculture. This, in turn, has led to a vicious spiral of deprivation, exemplified by the closing of village schools and shops and the disappearance of rural transport. The migration of workers has not been compensated for – indeed, has in some ways been aggravated – by the growing fashion for second homes.

The third ill is caused directly by modern agriculture itself – by its growing destruction of the wilderness. Not a week goes by without our reading of some encroachment on Exmoor, Otmoor, the Broads, or some similar area, while the battle to preserve endangered flora and fauna is a losing one. The fourth evil is the treatment of animals. The attitude of those who worked on farms 30 years ago was rough, not to say brutal, but it was infinitely preferable to today's cold-blooded wholesale exploitation.

In trying to devise solutions for these problems, our main enemy is the economic doctrine of Adam Smith and his successors. If you believe that 'under a freely competitive economic system the individual pursuit of economic self-interest would result in the economic benefit of the community', or that 'the substitution of one of the factors of production, land, capital or labour, for a more expensive one is inherently beneficial', or that the 'division of labour by producing greater wealth produces greater happiness', then you will probably end up with Free Trade and a derelict countryside – although, I grant you, plenty of butterflies – or with a nationwide mechanised food-factory. I hope that we find neither acceptable. On the other hand, a move towards Jesse Collings's aim of 'three acres and a cow' has much to commend it. I say 'towards' because I am not advocating either blanket or instant solutions. The country (and indeed Europe) is faced with an enforced change in its whole economy and the final answers are not going to emerge overnight, or probably even in the lifetime of any reader of this article.

But if it is not yet possible to see the goal in detail, we can at least assert that reforms which do away with the 'hired hand', repopulate the countryside, diversify work and bring livestock back into a human-scale relationship with man must be steps in the right direction. Government measures which encourage smaller holdings, put an upper limit on size and discourage corporate ownership would be part of such a move.

Of course, we shall be told by the vested interests, as well as by the classical economists, that such farming is uneconomic, by which they mean that it produces less food per unit of capital than the present system. This is absolutely true. On the other hand, it will produce more food per person and more food per acre. It will use renewable resources such as oil. We shall be told that it will be a retrograde step towards drudgery. The fact that the people who tell us so are in favour of the assembly-line is no answer. But anyone who has topped beets in cold, muddy weather knows that there is a difference between doing it in a three-acre and doing it in a hundred-acre field. The one is hard, tough, miserable work; but the other is unspeakable. Small holdings encourage great diversification of labour and diversified labour is not drudgery.

Above all, we shall be told that smallholdings cannot produce a decent standard of living for the farmer. Maybe. But it all depends on the available alternatives, or how we divide the work – part-time on the farm/part-time in small industry; or part-time for the community – and whether we can harness the small-scale, inexpensive, electronic gadgetry which our society has produced.

Something not unlike this is emerging as a pattern in the more prosperous parts of the Far East. It could become the pattern in the more socially-conscious undeveloped countries, instead of the mechanised farming of useless crops – coffee, tea, tobacco – to titillate the palates of the West. It could even be the pattern for us. If God gave the land to the people, as the British Left used to proclaim, it is high time they took possession of their heritage. □

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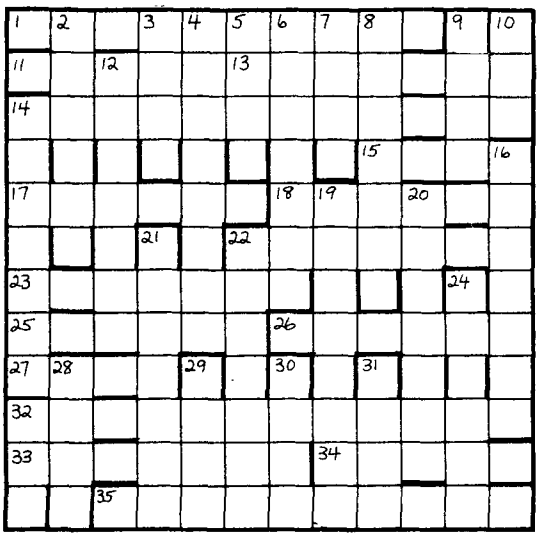
Salamanca 64

'Acrostic'

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 64, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 1 February.



In the order 11, 8, 26, 18, 9, 21, the unclued answers (whose unchecked letters give M., PM., NO IQ!) release a quotation which, it is hoped, will provide good advice to both solvers and setters alike.

Name_____

Address_____

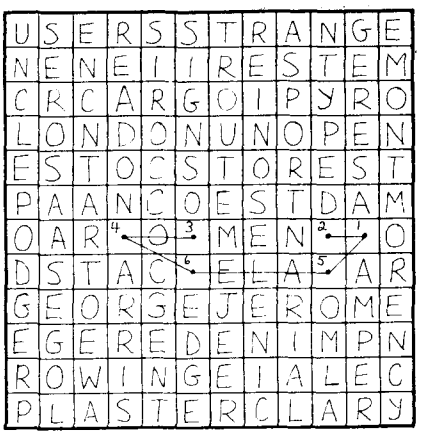
ACROSS

1 Disharmonious pop-singers may be (10)
13 A little pastoral poem (not a long one) a colleague's composed (7)
14 Errant's erratic when involved with gross blundering – he may be this? (12)
15 Here's a bustle all the Spanish use (4)
17 Brightly gleaming, this is all that remains of fire in back of grate (6)
22 These breaks in feet may be original cases for resetting (7)
23 Downed in rank protest showing spread (7)
25 Scots have let one lot run riot (6)
27 Advantage of some aged generals (4)
32 Share driers? They do, possibly, and some head cutting between them? (12)
33 A rum display mostly of greatest/least orbiting distance (7)
34 It's fluid used in part to immunise ruminants (5)
35 Most sad LP I spin – who is the singer and song-writer? (10)

DOWN

2 It's so fastidious to excite stir-up (6)
3 Ash sealed in this, with lid inside – dead on Mac's list (4)
4 Get petrol, form of tin, einsteinium and form of garnet (8)
5 This is a plant – S-self? (4)
6 Except X, discern vet to be at fault when traced out (7)
7 Some evergreen one's kept by law (4)
10 By nicely echoing cat sound (3)
12 Spenser's adverb means hotly, but not sly perhaps (7)
14 Some nonsense idiots talk, thus beginning to imitate a duck? (7)
16 Like a bone, large, and having use so, when broken (7)
19 Coffee is requiring strange processes to make – see drops? (8)
20 CB user, his machine coming in on a wave, given ear with kerb broadcast? (7)
22 In a weight of 100lb, take this as dominant (7)
24 Where whelp grows, suture may be needed in operation (6)
28 Which is used to dig up most bait for fishermen? (4)
29 Poems of old Scandinavians – could be dead works (4)
30 Steersman's gear made from hard timber (4)
31 Accustomed to American English catching on some day (4)
32 Taken to hospital one day when possessed (3)

Solution to Salamanca 62



My favourite book: *Three Men In A Boat*, by Jerome K. Jerome

Prizewinners to Salamanca 62

Mrs M. Taylor (Ayrshire)
D. M. MacArthur (Bristol)
Brenda J. Widger (Cheshire)

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Applications (in writing), enclosing full c.v. should be sent to David Norman, Post Office Engineering Union, Greystoke House, 150 Brunswick Road, Ealing, London, W5 1AW, marked 'Private and Confidential'. The closing date for receipt of written applications is first post Friday, 21 January 1983.

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RESEARCHER

wanted from March 1983 for nine months for a fee of £5,000 gross to look into aspects of ethnic participation in TUs in Lancs. **MUST** have knowledge/experience of TU structures and their operation **AND** an understanding of race relations issues, especially in employment. S/he should preferably have a Soc. Sc degree with two/three years' experience of research, especially in TU studies/industrial relations.

Write with full cv to:
J. Parkinson, Secretary
Lancs Association of Trades Councils
25 Brackenbury Road
Preston PR1 7UP
by 21 January, 1983

HACKNEY TRADES COUNCIL

TRADE UNION SUPPORT UNIT

has two new jobs funded by the GLC

1. A person to take the main responsibility for administration: including typing, basic book-keeping, organising information at the Unit. Some experience of publicity and design skills would be useful.
2. A person to develop work on the local economy with trade unions. The job will involve research, campaigning and organising skills.

For both jobs, experience and commitment are more of a priority than formal qualifications.

Salary £9,792 (The funding is until March 1984 but with the possibility of continuing after that date).

Part-time work or job-sharing considered.

Equal Opportunity employer.

Application forms and details from: **Hackney Trades Council Support Unit, 34 Dalston Lane, London E8 3AZ. Tel: 01-249 8086.**

Applications to be returned by 21 January 1983.

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to establish and administer our development programme, placing skilled personnel in community level projects. Good French is needed, a knowledge of Africa and its development problems and third world experience.

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requires a full-time

BOOK-KEEPER/ ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Responsibilities will include book-keeping, PAYE, VAT etc., responding to publications orders and maintaining membership records on Commodore microcomputer. **Salary £6,395**

For details and application form apply to:
Pauline Bryan, Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1. Tel. 01-222 8877

CO-OPERATIVE PARTY SECRETARY/ORGANISER

Merseyside Region of Co-operative Retail Services Limited, invite applications for the post of Co-operative Party Secretary/Organiser.

A sound knowledge of the Co-operative Movement is essential and Labour Party membership would be an advantage.

Salary based on NACO scale **£8,903**

Job specification and application form (to be returned by 31 January, 1983) from:

Mr D. H. Merry, National Organiser, The Co-operative Party, Co-operative Union Ltd, Holyoake House, Hanover Street, Manchester M60 0AS.

OV SELECTION CATERS for the more mature person as well as graduates and 'A' level students with typing and office skills. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy.) Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London, SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

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LISTINGS

THURS 6 JAN London WC1. Truth the first casualty? How the Falklands War became a propaganda war. Video of media coverage of war, presented by Glasgow University Media Group; panel of speakers including Anthony Barnett. Organised by JANE (Journalists against nuclear extermination), Fleet Steet CND and Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom. 7pm, Holborn Library, Theobalds Road, London WC1.

London. Britain and the World Recession. Geoff Kay, Kerry Schott and Ron Smith answer questions on this topic. First of a series of London forums organised by the Conference of Socialist Economists. Venue: The Black Horse, Rathbone Place, London W1, 8pm. Further details **01-607 9615.**

FRI 7 JAN Brixton. New Variety: Pink Dress Show, Joolz, Rosie Gibb. Unwaged £1, waged £2. Presented by CAST. 8pm, Old White Horse Pub, Brixton Rd, London SW1. **01-487 3440**

7-9 JAN Oxford. Positive Action for Women. Fabian Society weekend school, Ruskin Hall, Oxford. £38 members, £40 non-members. Spkrs included Hilary Wainwright, Joan Lestor, Christine Jackson, Ruth Lister. **01-222 8877**

SUN 9 JAN London WC1. Poetry and Commitment. Christopher Hampton, 11am, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1.

Barnes. Don Weller, Pete King with Tony Lee Trio 12-2pm and 8pm. Bulls Head, 373 Lonsdale Road, London SW13.

London WC1. Socialism and Secularism. Terry Liddle. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Wood Green. New Variety. See Jan 7. 8pm, Brabant Road Community Centre, Wood Green, London N22.

MON 10 JAN London W1. Men, Women and Craft printing. Cynthia Cockburn. History Workshop seminar, 6.45 for meeting at 7.30pm, Black Horse, Rathbone Place, London W1.

Battersea. 10-15 Jan. Roy Hutchins 'Variations on a Headache', comedian John Hegley, Podomoffski (surrealist magician). Bridge Lane Theatre, Battersea Bridge Rd, London SW1.

TUES 11 JAN Brixton. Sam the Man: Cartoon history of the Labour Party 'in 75 hilarious theatrical minutes.' Presented by CAST. 8pm Old White Horse Pub, Brixton Road, London SW9.

WED 12 JAN London NW1. The economic, political and social development of Ireland since 1900. 6.30 Working Men's College, Crowndale Road. **01-387 2037.**

THURS 13 JAN Southampton. Multi-cultural education, the US experience. Centre for International Studies in Education, the University, Southampton.

Shepherds Bush. New Variety: Pauline Melville, Tebbits Bicycle, Michelene Wandor, the Creators. 8pm Bush Hotel, Shepherds Bush Green, London W12.

London W1. New Hungarian Peace Movement, spkr Andrew White. 7pm Roebuck pub, 108 Tottenham Court Road. Orgd by London CND.

FORTHCOMING

14 JAN. Documentary film on Martin Luther King and non-violent direct action for black civil rights. 'King: Montgomery to Memphis.' Hargrave Hall, Archway, London N19. Also 17 Jan, Wanstead; 18 Jan Brixton; 19 Jan Kingston; 21 Jan Vauxhall; 22 Jan Stockwell. Orgd by London Peace Action. **01-633 0133.**

15 JAN Sheffield. Workers against racism: Northern Day of Action, Sheffield. Demonstration 12 noon Hallamshire Hospital, Action Conference Memorial Hall, Sheffield. **01-274 3951.**

15 JAN London W1. The politics of regional policy. Meeting orgd by Conference of Socialist Economics. 10 Percy Street, London W1. Contact P. Preston, 127 Holland Road, London W14.

16 JAN London WC1. From Herzl to Mapam — streams of Socialist Zionism. Day conference, 10.30-4.30pm 1/2 Endleigh Street, London WC1. Orgd by Mapam, **01-328 2554.**

18 JAN London SE1. Arts and the Economy. Lecture, Prof J. K. Galbraith. Cottesloe Theatre, South Bank. Admission Free.

18 JAN Putney. Brighter future for Council tenants. Public meeting on Labour's housing policies, with Gerald Kaufman MP, Peter Hain and Mike Williams. 7.30pm, Methodist Hall, Minstead Gardens, London SW15.

19 JAN London WC1. Controversial issues in medicine: Private or Public Medicine? Frank Dobson MP. 7pm, Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, London WC1. **01-831 7711.**

21 JAN Cardiff. Human Cost of Nuclear War. One day conference. Chairmen: Sir Richard Doll, Sir Douglas Black, Prof Alwyn Smith, Dr John Gleisner. Sessions on Medical Consequences of Nuclear Weapons, Health Planning in Relation to Nuclear War, the Threat and the Reality of Nuclear War; The Responsibility of Physicians. St Davids Hall, Cardiff. £7 (students £3.) **Alex Chown 0222 562021.**

22 JAN Birmingham. West Midlands CND Campaign Strategy Meeting, 11am-5.30pm. St Francis Hall, Birmingham University. **021-632 6909.**

26 JAN Nottingham. Warplan UK and Medical Consequences of the Bomb. Spkrs: Duncan Campbell and Nick Armstrong. 7.30. Friends Meeting House, Nottingham. Orgd by Nottingham CND.

26 JAN Women and social work group, working group of GLC Women's Committee. Open meeting for women, 7pm County Hall, London. **01-671 0051**

27 JAN Manchester. The Left in the 1980s. Spkrs: Stuart Hall, Beatrix Campbell. Orgd by Marxism Today and North West Communist Party. 7.30 Manchester Polytechnic Students Union, Manchester 13.

28-30 JAN. Bath. CND Campaign skill-sharing weekend, sessions on non-violent direct action, public speaking, and campaign against cruise. Orgd by West Region CND. Cost £9. **Contact Chappie, Bath 26948.**

29 JAN. The London Assembly. Second Forum for representatives from London organisations. Discussion includes public services, London's finances, employment. 10am-1.30pm. Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1. Orgd by GLC.

29 JAN London. Improving Council Housing Estates. Working conference. Orgd by Safe Neighbourhoods Unit. **01-729 1366.**

29 JAN London SE1. Racism and Schools. One day open consultative conference. Spkrs include Farrukh Dhondy, Ray Chatwin, Norma Gibbs. 11am-4pm, County Hall, London SE1. Org by Communist Party, **01-251 4406.**

29 JAN Leeds. New tasks for Irish solidarity. One day conference, 10am-5pm Leeds Trades Club, Savile Mount, Leeds 6. Orgd by Irish Freedom Movement. **01-274 3951.**

30 JAN. Leeds. Remember Bloody Sunday. Demonstration on 11th anniversary killing of 14 Irish people by British army. Orgd by Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee/Irish Freedom Movement. **01-274 3951.**

30 JAN Birmingham. West Midlands CND Annual General Meeting. 2pm, UCATT, Gough Street, Birmingham.

30 JAN London WC1. Tawney: Social Democrat or democratic socialist? Tom Evans. 11am, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square.

3 FEB London WC1. Football as a working class sport. Stuart Weir, 6.30 Conway Hall, Red Lion Square.

5-6 FEB. Socialist Society Annual Conference. Workshop meetings and plenary sessions on the Alternative to Thatcherism, a Policy for Ending Unemployment, Europe, NATO and the Threat of Nuclear War. Sir William Collins School, Charrington Street, London NW1. **01-734 8501.**

26 FEB Manchester. Ban Plastic Bullets: a Labour movement delegate conference. 11am, UMIST, Barnes Wallis Building, Sackville Street, Manchester 1. Contact: **Plastic Bullets Conference, Box 15, 164/6 Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN.**

26-27 MAR London. Politics of the Family, 2 day conference. Orgd by Socialist Society.

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